LEGENDS

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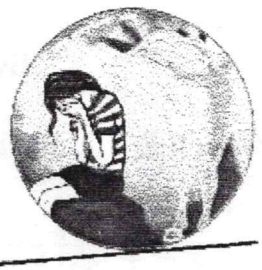

Massiv In Mensch

Fiction : Lucy Grieves

A Bottle of Blue Pills by Eric L. Busby
Anniversary by Peter Miller
Let Me Think & God and Chips by Sue Simpson

CREDITS

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Writers: Eric L. Busby, Peter Miller, pixie, Mike Ventarola, Zubrovka, The Mean Little Man, Azriel J. Knight, Dan Century, Unkle Joz, Sue Simpson, Marcus Pan

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MASTERFUL HEAD?

The Cover: Designed by our resident graphic artist **Rev. Daryl Litts**. The photo of Massiv In Mensch was provided by **ArtOfFact Records** [Canada] and the illustration clip by **Michael Auger** (Auger Artwork, www.arty4ever.com) is from *Lucy Grieves* in this issue.

Illustration: Lee Alverson, coveted artist of the recent *Disoriented* series (Legends #109-#113) and other fiction features, appears again with illustrations for *A Bottle of Blue Pills,* the continuing domino series in which the previously acclaimed *Disoriented* began. Michael Auger, who created the artwork that appeared in Legends #115 adorning the story *Pick Up the Pieces* returns this month with his work created for **Uncle Joz**'s *Lucy Grieves,* our fiction feature this month. Also here is a four shot of **The Parking Lot is Full.**

Writing: Many writers contributed this month. The review staff includes **Mike Ventarola, Azriel J. Knight, Dan Century** and **Marcus Pan;** and the debut of our newest reviewer, **pixie.** Our feature interview with Massiv In Mensch was provided by **Zubrovka.** Columns from **The Mean Little Man** and **Mike Ventarola** are here. Fiction writers this month includes the awaited return of **Eric L. Busby** with *A Bottle of Blue Pills,* a debut by **Unkle Joz** with *Lucy Grieves,* a short fiction piece called *Anniversary* by **Peter Miller** and multiple stories by our regular contributor **Sue Simpson.**

About Legends: Legends has been published since October 1990. All issues released (#1 - #65 as 2nd editions) are available for $5.00 each to cover mailing costs. **In-stock issues and advance subscriptions are available for $3.00 each issue.** Make checks/money orders payable to Marcus Pan. Any submissions of art or literature are greatly appreciated and accepted on a donatory basis. The submitter receives the issue in which it appears free of charge. Service and advertising swaps in return for literature, artwork, etc. are also available. Advertising is available both in the hardcopy version and as banners on the online version of Legends Magazine. Rates are shown on page 24 – these rates are only available for a limited time. All writers and artists retain copyright for their work. The collection of such, i.e. this issue of Legends Magazine itself, is copyright © 2002 by Marcus Pan.

Contacting: Send all review submissions and other post materials to Legends Magazine, 158 Main St., South River, NJ, 08882. Call (732) 432-4285 for further information. I can also be contacted via e-mail by writing to marcus@legendsmagazine.net. Come see us at www.legendsmagazine.net on the Web. Bands and labels, keep your new music coming. **Special consideration for new and indie artists!**

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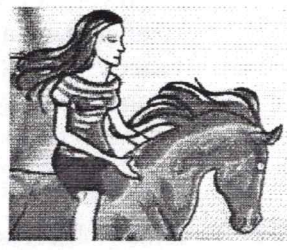

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The Darker the Music...

...the Brighter the Mind!

Editor's Notes

Merry new year and stuffages everyone. I thought it appropriate if we began 2002 with another cover design by Rev. Daryl Litts who has also done past covers of issues #111 and #115. Rev. Daryl Litts is also the designer and creator of our dragon logo that first debuted on issue #109 as well, so look him up if you have some designing work to have done, he's quite good as you can see.

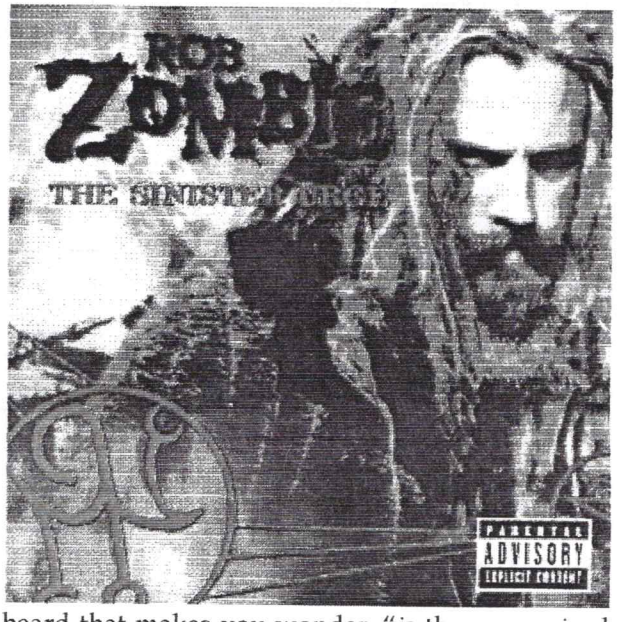
This month we have two writing debuts for you – pixie joins the review staff and gives us a look at Bitter Fall and a V/A compilation called **A Cage Went in Search of a Bird**. Also, Uncle Joz debuts with his fiction short story, *Lucy Grieves*, which also features illustration by artist Michael Auger of Auger Artwork (www.arty4ever.com). Lee Alverson adorns *A Bottle of Blue Pills* by Eric L. Busby, the long awaited continuation in the domino series that began with *Disoriented* that first appeared back in Legends #109. There's more to come in that series when we bring you *Nox: Dark Offering*, a two-part serial, in upcoming issues.

Considering I only have a bare handful of days before this issue should hit the street, let me beg off chattering here so that I can bring you the latest Legends. So take it easy and I'll see you on the back page.

Marcus Pan
December 28, 2001
1:51PM

REVIEW: Rob Zombie – "The Sinister Urge"

By Dan Century



If I were to tell you that there's a new Rob Zombie album, could you guess what it sounds like?

- **Late 80s/early 90s metal-industrial you say?** Good guess. Rob's been referencing 80s industrial ever since White Zombie dropped their Sonic Youth sound, and Rob started hanging out at the Limelight.
- **Powerman 5000 you say?** Excellent guess. Spider, the singer of Powerman 5000, is Rob Zombie's real life brother. These siblings share a passion for science fiction and hard rock.
- **Exactly like every other Rob Zombie and White Zombie album you say?** Yes, yes! How did you guess? Well, considering the fact that nearly all Rob Zombie albums sound exactly alike, it was an easy guess.

Yes mamma! Rob is back with another album of the same old stuff: The same effect-fried metallic guitars, gorilla-on-crack drumming, creepy keyboards, B-movie film samples, Satanic-horror-evil-robot-naked-women artwork, and that gigantic dreadlock mess and Moses beard that makes you wonder, "is there a squirrel living in there." Oh, and he still starts every song with "Yeaaah!"

So you must be wondering, "Why bother to review an album that sounds exactly like every other Rob Zombie album?" "Why not grab your previous Zombie review and cut-n-paste the new album title in place of the old?" Well, to be frank, despite the fact that this is probably the weakest Zombie album yet, I still like it. I still like the insane, over-the-top production. I still like the obnoxious, inane, and at times totally retarded lyrics. I still like the fact that every Rob Zombie

album sounds like late 80s / early 90s Wax Trax! industrial. Don't bother telling me I dwell in the past – and don't bother telling Rob Zombie either.

In all fairness, there are some changes to the Zombie sound on **The Sinister Urge**. The use of record scratching, courtesy of DJ Lethal and Mix Master Mike, adds a modern touch to the record, but I'm not sure its necessary. Rob also employs a touch more keyboards and electronics on **Urge** – *Bring Her Down* sounds more like the soundtrack to the *Mummy*, than heavy metal.

33% of **Sinister Urge** is rockin', 33% is mundane and forgettable and the remaining 34% is just plain awful. Again these percentages are typical of a Zombie release, but this time the rotten is very rotten, and the rockin' is teetering precariously on the edge of the mundane. Truly awful songs include *Never Gonna Stop* which sounds like a Tony Robbins motivational tape, and *Iron Head* which is a boring and ill conceived duet with Ozzy Osborne.

There are some true gems on the album. *Scum of the Earth* and *Dead Girl Superstar* are classic Rob Zombie tracks – see the second paragraph for a basic description. *Dead Girl Superstar* gets extra props for sampling 1970s Blaxsploitation classic *Truck Turner*. *House of 1000 Corpses*, presumably the theme song to the Zombie directed horror film of the same name, is a raw and bloody blues stomp. *Corpses* is a real treat for Zombie fans who appreciate his taste for horror. I hope his film gets released soon[1]. I also hope Rob tries something fresh and new on his next album, besides record scratching.

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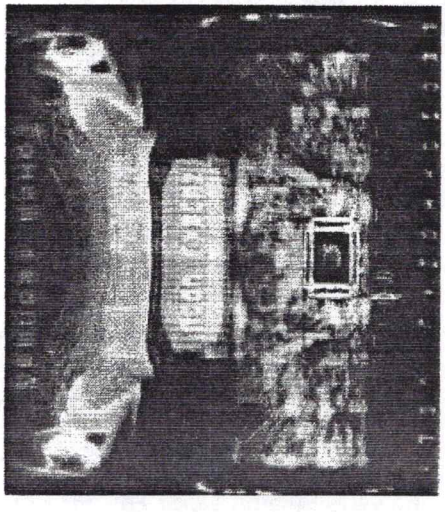
REVIEW: NOISE PROCESS – "NEURAL CODE"

By Rat Bastard



Arizona's Noise Process definitely have the concept of 'Truth in Advertising' concept down pat. An examination of the cover of their new full length debut release **Neural Code**, with its computer graphics and circuitboard imagery, instantly warns of the electronically-induced aural assault awaiting the listener (as opposed to say, a polka-induced aural assault... though I suppose there could be a possibility of an electronic polka-induced aural assault, but that would simply be, as it is referred to in The Business(tm), "fucked up"). And Noise Process certainly delivers on this front.

Noise Process's sound is a hard-edged and aggressive brand of EBM/Industrial, with thick and throbbing dancebeats combined with layers of complex synth programming for additional texture and atmosphere, and coated with angry and heavily distorted male vocals. Those familiar with the genre will be able to make definite comparisons to artists such as Velvet Acid Christ, Mentallo and the Fixer and Funker Vogt.

Neural Code doesn't really take off until the third track, *Drifting*, as the first two, *Incarnate* and *More Than Once* are actually the weakest on the album. However, this is compensated for by remixes of these two tracks, which are tacked onto the end, after the slow and atmospheric interlude of *Ellipsis*, which provides the only period of rest amidst the steady dancefloor onslaught.

[1] See the Internet Movie Database for more information: http://us.imdb.com/Title?0251736

In short, Noise Process don't really offer anything particularly new and revolutionary in the genre...at least not yet. However, **Neural Code** is certainly a competent entry into the world of aggressive and dark EBM, which is probably sufficient cause for fans of any of the previously mentioned bands to, at the very least, give **Neural Code** a listen.

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BRAINDANCE - REDEMPTION

By J. 'Hirez' H-R

By rights, I should hate every lovingly-crafted second of this recording. Phrases like over-blown, self-important and 'Too many notes, Beethoven' should be scattered across a bile-fired review guaranteed to generate even more hate-mail than the last one. But that's not going to happen.

Allow me to explain: My musical Year Zero was 1977. I dig the Pistols and Joy Division and Gang of Four and Severed Heads. Pink Floyd, yes Marillion and their bloated prog-rock public-schoolboy chums, are examples of all that is/was ugly and wrong with The Music Industry. The fact that P-F can still sell records is something I find seriously depressing.

So we find Braindance. Songs of vast scope that seem to have a minimum of three tunes each, guitar solos - lots of them - that the metal mags would call 'pyrotechnic,' majestic and orchestral synth pads, chorused-to-death acoustic guitar... It's prime-grade, 100% authentic prog-goth. The sort of stuff we fought the punk rock wars against. And...I really rather like the blasted thing. I wish I knew why.

I suspect it's because there's a sense of humour mixed in with the fine songwriting. I hope. If the creators are deadly serious and have thrown in nods to various subsets of dance-culture as a calculated plan to appeal to as broad a market-base as possible, then I shall be Very Annoyed.

Nevertheless, the breakbeats and squitty drum & bass snare-rolls are dropped in where you would least expect. And they keep doing it. Song after multi-layered song telegraphs some prog-rock cliche and then subverts it so I burst into delighted laughter rather than cringeing. Example: *Resilience* starts with spooky synths, a choir and a tolling bell and builds up toward a rising guitar-solo that launches the song upward into... The despairing noise you get when someone turns off the power to the record-deck. This is the first time for a long while that I've wanted to go meet a band to find out what on earth is going on in their heads. It's most unnerving.

The following track, *Requiem*, doesn't fare quite so well. As anyone who's heard Apollo 440's take on *Don't Fear the Reaper* it's hard to map this sort of rock onto techno. The end result often doesn't gel because the two forms rock in different manners. But, if I can only find something to whine about in the first half of one track out of ten, I think we can consider the whole to be a bit of a result. Oh, all the tracks begin with 'R', which is a courageous decision, and there are more mad samples than you can shake several sticks at artfully scattered throughout.

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ANNIVERSARY

By Peter Miller

If there's one thing that can be said for Venice, it's that it wears its age well. That's not to say that it doesn't look old, of course; the passing of time is infused in its every stone. Indeed, it slowly sinks into an ocean of age as surely as it succumbs to the grey waters that flood its canals. That being said, it's hard to imagine Venice in its youth, so perfectly does it assume the dignity of its twilight years.

Jakob Florea walked in quiet contemplation along the colonnade on the eastern side of the piazza. It was nearly midnight, but people were still about. A crowd of students, silver masked, cloaked in deep crimson and laughing madly, floated down the steps of the palace and off into the night. Their voices echoed back along the Calle Specchieri and faded into the somber lap of water against stone.

He resisted the urge to follow them and made his way through the obscure little alleys that led to the Caffè di Ombre.

Jakob wondered if she would come. What was it now - forty years? Forty five? It seemed like yesterday, but these days he was finding it hard to sort the past into any kind of order. Some memories rang in his thoughts like the clear shimmer of a bell, and yet, others slipped and twined like the black eels that lived under the Bridge of Sighs. It occurred to him in fact that his recollections were much like the streets of the city itself, spirals and convolutions - here leading to a dead end, there into a piazza flecked with brilliant red geraniums. And everywhere covered with moss and flaking paint.

A light mist was making haloes around the lamps as he took a chair by the canal. It was probably a little too chilly to sit outdoors, but he seldom felt the cold anyway. He caught the rich scent of aniseed moments before Lucio, unbidden, brought him his usual glass of Pastis.

A young couple were talking loudly at a table inside, confident and fearless. It was a privilege of the young to be afraid of nothing. He felt a breath of wind on his face and realized with a start that she was there beside him in the shadows.

"Did I frighten you, Jakob?" she asked, smiling.

"You inevitably frighten me, Violetta." Her green eyes caught a flicker of light from the candles. "You don't look a day older." he said.

"Oh, very amusing." she replied, but she was obviously pleased to see him. "Don't you ever get tired of this old town?"

"It suits me." he said. He took her hand and kissed it.

"Did you think I'd forget?" she asked him.

"Not so much that you'd forget. I wondered whether it would still be important to you. It's been a while since New York and much longer since we studied here." He laughed. "I know you were never one for nostalgia."

"That's true," said Violetta "but I do make exceptions once in a while. For the things that matter."

"Shall we walk?" he asked.

"I'd love to," she said, rising.

They set off along the San Marco canal and over the Ponte di Paglia. A vaporetto passed with a low growl under the bridge and its wash hissed down the canal.

"So how is New York?" he said.

"Oh, I still enjoy it there. I'm practicing law."

"Ah." he said. "There really is no need, you know. I can easily send more money..."

"Don't be silly. You know I don't do it for the money. It makes for an interesting diversion."

Jakob nodded. "Yes, I remember your fondness for... diversions. I still find it uncomfortable though, that you actually choose to work. Maybe I'm just too old fashioned."

"Positively Medieval," she laughed.

"Still," he said, "you belong to one of the great noble families. It used to be that none of us actually worked for money, especially the women."

"It's not the same now Jakob." she said. "If I chose not to work it would be very conspicuous. I would have to do the whole socialite thing and you know how much I hate that."

He remembered their time in Manhattan and knew she was right of course. If only she would come back to Venice. Those things were so much easier here. The Old Money was respected. No-one asked questions. Family wealth wasn't the social millstone that it seemed in contemporary America. But, unlike most of the Family, Violetta was a truly contemporary woman.

They stopped by the Academia. Here in the slate grey of the moonlight it was easy to imagine that it hadn't changed even slightly from the day it was built. Darkness blurred and smoothed the ancient roughness of pitted stone and rotting wood. "So what does one do on such an auspicious occasion?" Violetta asked. Muted reflections danced across her face. "A suitably vintage champagne would be appropriate, but I know you don't drink wine." She was as disrespectful as ever, he noticed.

There was a sound in the street. Instinctively they both stepped back into the shadows. Footsteps, unsteady, from a corner just beyond the lamplight. And a subtle nuance of madeira, cigarettes and perfume.

A girl, one of the silver-masked students from the palace, made her way across the square. Jakob caught a glint of metal at the corner of his eye and saw that Violetta had drawn a small stiletto. Quietly he put his hand over hers and inclined his head.

"It's not New York," he whispered. And then he was gone.

The masked girl was aware of his shadow for only moments before she sank to the ground without even a sigh. He moved the body out of the radius of light from the lamp.

"That seemed familiar," Violetta said, "although in my day we did try for at least a little conversation." She smiled and touched his face with a cold pale hand.

An image from the past flashed into his mind; her red hair spread across his pillow like flames, the scent of quinces on the sheets, pigeons fluttering across the tiled roof.

"In those days many things were different," he said.

He punctured the skin in the girl's throat. A bright red thread of blood trickled down over his hand.

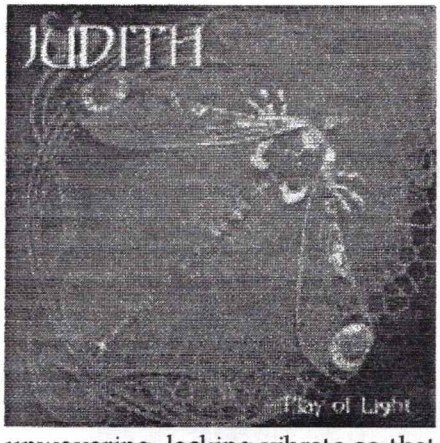
"A toast," Jakob Florea said. "To us."

"And to the next thousand years," said Violetta de Medici.

And they drank.

REVIEW: JUDITH – "PLAY OF LIGHT"

By Marcus Pan



Trio Christopher David, Damian James and Brian Veit released their third full length album as Judith in October, 2001. **Play of Light** builds upon the past work of Judith, which includes the previous 1998 **La Reveuse**[2] which has created a lot of apprehension as fans awaited this next release. Adding more of a melodic overtone to their previous work, **Play of Light** shows Judith's definite refinement and maturity. The production as a-plus, the sound quality is top notch and the arrangements are beautifully created, remaining edgy and razor sharp while blending all the instruments closer together into a much more polished sound than previous works.

Christopher David's voice is a powerful baritone that is even, strong and carries extremely well. This latest outing by Judith continues their reign as one of the most talented gothic rock style bands of the past decade. David's vocals are true and unwavering, lacking vibrato so that he can achieve sound of power and doing so well. The arrangement of the music is also well done, harkening back to more classical styles and applying all instruments with a strength and clarity while not overshadowing any. Guitars, bass, vocals, percussion – all keep a steady pace with each other; holding their own yet blending wonderfully. Clearly Christopher David's singing is a highlight portion of Judith's body of work.

There's plenty of tracks here that would fit extremely well within the playlists of mainstream radio, and likewise you can hear them on many college and alternative stations. Yet all retain a darker edge helped along by David's deep voice. Judith has also appeared at a number of American and European venues, so they're well-traveled and play live often. From Blackout A.D. to Whitby Gothic Weekend, The Italian Ascension of the Gods Open Air Festival and the Hall of Dreams Festival in Portugal. They've done all these, and are also planning a two-continent tour in support of the new **Play of Light** CD.

Favorites on **Play Of Light**, besides the title track which is quite good, include *Switchblade* for it's pleasing tone, excellent guitar arrangements including wailing yet controlled solo style notes that you can easily hear rising on high. You clearly hear this work, but at the same time it's part of the musical arrangement and blends with it while still retaining its individuality. This is an example of Judith's gorgeous arrangement style – while all instruments retain a sense of themselves, they all are part of something bigger than they could be alone. As another example of the wonderful guitars, the closing guitar solo of *La Bella* is slow, morose and plucked from the guitar lightly and accurately.

Fields of Green is another favorite, one of the swifter moving tracks on the album. Another example of great musical arrangement with its smooth rock musicality built around a framework of classical style and creation. Also a word – actually a whole bunch of them – needs to be said about the eighth track; *Seeing Sun*. Slow piano and windy background synthesizer chords open a moody piece of beautiful sound. Christopher David tones his voice to a mere whisper – a far off call. And suddenly, after a short break, *Seeing Sun* slides into a guitar laden dirge of energy. They close **Play of Light** with the powerful *Drop of Passion*. This is alternative rock if ever their was, with hints of modern movements built around a dark tone of moroseness. Latter portions of the song become rhythmically challenging and explore synthesizer chorales before breaking into one of the cleanest, tightest and well executed guitar solos I've had the pleasure to hear in a while.

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[2] Reviewed in Legends #100, July 2000.

For alternative rock with a Victorian flair, check out the latest by Judith. If you like work by This Ascension, Eyes of Pandora and other on-the-edge dark rock, you'll love **Play of Light**.

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REVIEW: BITTER FALL – "SWEET RISE"

By pixie

You can't judge a book, or in this case a CD, by the cover, but it never hurts to give it a look. The cover of Bitter Fall's debut album, **Sweet Rise** tells a lot - the image, a woman who looks not entirely unlike a porcelain doll based on Bjork, appears to be drowning in a sea of blue. It's weird looking, and sets you up for what is indeed a strange listening experience.

It strikes me at times that Bitter Fall may have been influenced by NIN, or more accurately by bands that were influenced by NIN, possibly more along the lines of Stabbing Westward. However, I'm not sure Bitter Fall know, at this point in their existence, what type of music they want to play. The rock influence is there, as is the pop, and the industrial - and their songs certainly have a dark tone, but it doesn't always melt together as seamlessly as it could.

The opening song, *One More Time* is a moody tune, vaguely reminiscent of the Cure, as is *Sweet Rise*. I can't really explain how they manage to invoke The Cure without sounding a bit like them, but they do. The band's strongest songs come out of this sound - they're darker and tighter and seem to have more of a passion within these songs. When they embrace their angsty side, and lean towards what sounds almost like a MTV "bottled teen anguish" sound such as on *How Is This Going to End*, things start to fall apart.

Thus, the album ebbs and flows, with incredible inconsistency. The absolute low point of the album, however, is a cover of *People Are Strange* by The Doors that makes me wish the original had never been recorded so this band wouldn't have had the chance to do this cover. The rest of the album is shades in between, but overall, this isn't bad for a debut. With time and direction, this band could be something interesting, as they certainly have the potential. What they choose to do with that remains to be seen.

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MP3: The Music Revolution

By Mike Ventarola

It's hard to tell if the Hidden Sanctuary is a blessing or a curse. Not having the skills for HTML coding, volunteers from the artist roster have been cultivated to update the page on a monthly basis. The first was SINTZ, a genius in his own right, who eventually had to bow out do to commitments with film soundtrack work. Then followed Mike Riddick from The Soil Bleeds Black, who is also assigned work for many CD covers. His brilliant work has naturally caught on like fire and he too ended up taking a step back to fulfill his obligations.

Just when the thought of any assistance seemed far removed, Azriel Knight, reviewer and editor of Comatose Rose (http://www.comatoserose.cjb.net/), offered to lend a hand. Not only did he fix the codes FAST, but our dialogues also indicated that his rates are probably the most reasonable than most working on net coding today. For those interested in getting assistance with making their web page a little more "spiffy," contact Azriel at azrieljknight@yahoo.com.

Attention Staten Island Goths!

It seems the darkly clad on this forsaken island have taken over a tavern/coffee shop. Whet your whistle and stop for a while with other brethren of the night at:
Dolci
3800-A Richmond Ave.
Staten Island, NY 10312

21 and over please!

Got Goth Shops?

Thanks to Blu from Starvox, she introduced me to a few more really great online shops that you just have to take a peak at.

Devout Dolls is a Northwest shop that hand makes the cutest little bat dolls as well as two headed lady dolls. No two are alike and each is named differently. If you are in the market for monsters, fairies, and other ghoulish style dolls, take a peak ant the handiwork here! http://www.fancydeluxe.com/devout/monster_guiedo.htm

Bela Lugosi spotted in Florida! For those who still cling to the Bauhaus song Bela Lugosi's Dead, you may as well decorate your home or yard to demonstrate that penchant with a Bela Lugosi lawn ornament.

Sex, Death & Eyeliner

NOW Available. The Video and the CD soundtrack that is making goth history. The line-up of songs are simply priceless and the video is rather awesome. The video may shock some as there is a bit of vampire elements and blood fetishism filmed, but overall it was an entertaining video and one worthy of many repeated viewings. www.darkfuturemusic.com

Goth Greetings Cards

Tired of the mundane greeting cards that seem to endlessly parade your way? Turn folks on to Goth greetings and let them know that this is what you want to see in your mailbox next time they send you something too cheery!
http://www.newyorkcarver.com/postpics.htm

Bad Boy Bowie!!

David Bowie has refused to sign his contract renewal with Virgin and is going more or less indie with his own label. Bowie has pretty much succumbed to the BS of the music media and churned out critically acclaimed albums that were duds with the fans. Not since *Let's Dance* has the artist has a hit. Quite frankly, it's about time someone of his creative genius took a stand if you ask me. Read all about it here: http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/entertainment/music/newsid_1714000/1714545.stm

London After Midnight is now in the studio writing and recording music for the next release, with a working title of **Violent Acts of Beauty**. A tour is planned after the CD's release sometime in 2002. Dates in the USA, Canada, Europe and Japan should be included on this tour. Check TOUR DATES page of their website for the latest info at http://www.londonaftermidnight.com.

The Empire Strikes Back!

Myke Hideous states, "It seems to me that there is no better time than the present to bring back the apocalyptic music that THE EMPIRE HIDEOUS created for it's listeners many years ago. Songs of life and death. War and destruction. Heaven and Hell. Falling empires and revolutionary rebellions. Now, after 4 dormant years, The Empire is ready to puncture the vein for those who where aware of what I spoke of in my music so many years ago. A world of change; through the acts of violence in a nation that once stood untouched in this

modern world. As I've sat and listened to the songs I've written (some more than ten years ago), I realized that I prayed they would never make so much sense. Since the idea of reforming Empire Hideous some two and a half years ago, I have been troubled by countless dilemmas that stood in my way to get this project off the ground and to my fans. Now, in light of the current events that have taken place in NYC, the stage couldn't beckon me more to shout out to the world than it already has in these past few months. In addition, my long time friend and former guitarist Jeff Austin has rejoined The Empire, completing the much awaited return. As of now, the line up for our upcoming gig in 2002 consists of the following:
Myke Hideous - vocals
Jeff Austin - lead guitar
J-Sin Trioxin - rhythm guitar
Daniel Esser - bass
Byron Barbieri - drums
The first sonic performance of The Empire Hideous will take place Saturday, January 19th, 2002, at The Batcave in NYC. Hope to see you there!"

For the ultimate in KEWL check out this link with a life-like Myke Hideous doll! Myke Hideous of the Empire Vivendi Starring as Screwged!

It was only a matter of time before the charade that took place with the Universal/Vivendi takeover of MP3 started to wind its way into the halls of the company itself. It seems that instead of Christmas bonuses this year, many employees received the pink slip! This, mind you, from a company that puts the CEO in a 17 million dollar NYC apartment, but pays artists a mere half a penny for their musical work. If Dickens were to write A Christmas Carol today, Universal would be the new Scrooge. Just goes to show that the major labels don't care who they screw, even if it is one of their own.
http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h/cn/20011204/tc/vivendi_trims_staff_in_new_division_1.html

Sin was never this much fun!
With the downfall of MP3, folks longing for good indie music have been traveling to Ampcast. The band, The Sins are not currently mating with Yaks in foreign territory as some rumors would have you believe. They ARE gathering a lot of steam from the goth music fans who have discovered their brilliant work on Ampcast and are sitting in the #1 spot as of this writing. They have been so busy with their working on their first release that their absence had some folks very concerned to their whereabouts and activity. Now you know the truth. Be on the lookout for their first full CD, **The Beginning**, to be released in February. www.ampcast.com/thesins

Speaking of Ampcast, artists who want to place music online in an environment that severely deals with cheaters are highly encouraged to seek out Ampcast. There is only an annual sign up fee, as opposed to the monthly fee from the MP3 money hounds. Artist concerns are dealt with promptly, songs are approved in a matter of minutes and cheaters are tossed off the site, thereby allowing the cream to rise to the top. www.ampcast.com

SINTZ You Went Away!
Sintz, the former webmaster of the Hidden Sanctuary page as mentioned in the opening is happy to announce that the film **Dysphoria** is well underway. Below is a list of the artists involved in the soundtrack.

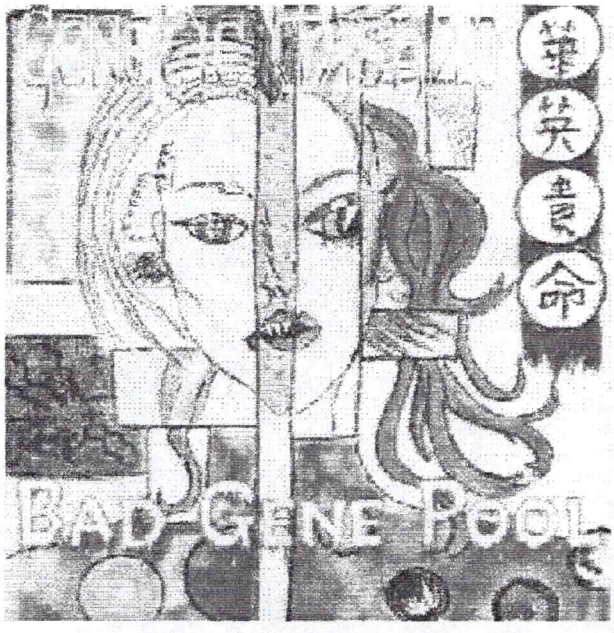
Pulsar Bleu - Insomnia (Trip Hop)
Phil Traynor - THOROUGHLY LORBER (Jazz)
Michael Yongue - (Radio Announcer Voice)
Distorted Penguins - Cloud 9 (Alternative)
SiNSeeker - Custom Written Music (Rap)
And of course SINTZ - Custom Written Score (Dream Scape), FX Sound, Post
Production Sound and Soundtrack
Faith & The Muse
(from Side-Line Magazine..bless their hearts!)

To hold us over until next years F&TM new studio album William and Monica have delivered 28 hard to find and unreleased tracks for your perusal. For over eight years Faith and the Muse have been writing material that blend an array of musical styles from gothic/darkwave, to ethereal/ambient, to industrial and classical. **Vera Causa** is a 2 disc set that contains rarities, live tracks, remixes, and covers most of which were previously unreleased. Remixers include Collide, Laboratory X, L'ame Immortalle, Rhea's Obsession, Purr Machine, Cassandra Complex, and The Trace. Included are renditions of Kate Bush's *Running Up that Hill* and *Hollow Hills* by Bauhuas plus much more. Look for William and Monica on tour in Europe this fall. www.mercyground.com

It's a short month of news folks simply because of holiday shopping and never ending hunt for bargain prices in this disastrous economy. Hopefully you have all had a joyous holiday season and are ready to shop for some more dark music soon!

REVIEW: GENETIC MISHAP – "BAD GENE POOL"

By Azriel J. Knight



Why do I get the feeling Genetic Mishap is hiding a copy of Frooty Loops or Acid Pro somewhere? Oh yeah, because the sound is unoriginal and boring, and when I mean boring I mean, wow, I forgot the CD was playing. The CD begins with some sounds thrown together aimlessly and the vocals of R.W. Marino Jr. which are nothing short of horrid. The guy actually has the nerve to call himself a mastermind on their IUMA.com page. I am sure they are just beating records label reps off their lawn, duck here comes another one.

Track 2 is a repetitive mess, and the lyrics of these songs have a junior high school quality. Entitled *To the Limit*, Marino's vocals are distorted, which still sounds god awful. I can't tell if it's someone singing or if it's a dog chewing on the mic. The album cover is adorned with a pencil drawing resembling a high school art assignment that failed. Why oh why do I feel like I am getting the ass end of the deal this month? Marcus must be picking on the new guy. By track three I am nearly in pain. There is a war brewing between my ears and the headphones. (Headphones: 3 Ears: 0)

Even with abstract music there is a certain level of form, a guideline if you will on what music basically is, and quite frankly these guys must have lost it. One would almost think Genetic Mishap is trying to sound like shit. Track 5, *Damnation*, brings the eye-clawing vocals of Marino back. The lyrics read, "hell is no place for a girl like you, hell is where you were born to be with me." Tell me, how the fuck does that work? In parts of the song they slow the music down and speed it back up, and down again, with some bad samples of wolves. Luckily, this only goes on for 3 minutes, and then the song is over.

Track 6 was actually tolerable; heavy distortion on the guitars and vocals make a nice "I am anger hear me roar tune" again though, a little repetitive, since it's the same guitar loop for most of the song. Genetic Mishap are fluffers of the music industry. For those of you don't know, fluffers are women who give male porn stars blow jobs so they are good and hard for the next scene. Same goes for GM, they make the real musicians look better.

The CD as a whole was a great disappointment, and literally painful to listen to. Fifteen tracks of unoriginal material that was most likely thrown together in a couple weeks while definitely being on something. If someone took a turd and shaped it into a CD, and put it into a jewel case, I would not have known the difference. Bands like these should take their CD's off the shelves or wherever they have them, bury them and start over, and practice instead of taking draft one and calling it an album. (Headphones: 15 Ears: Bleeding)

Contact Information:
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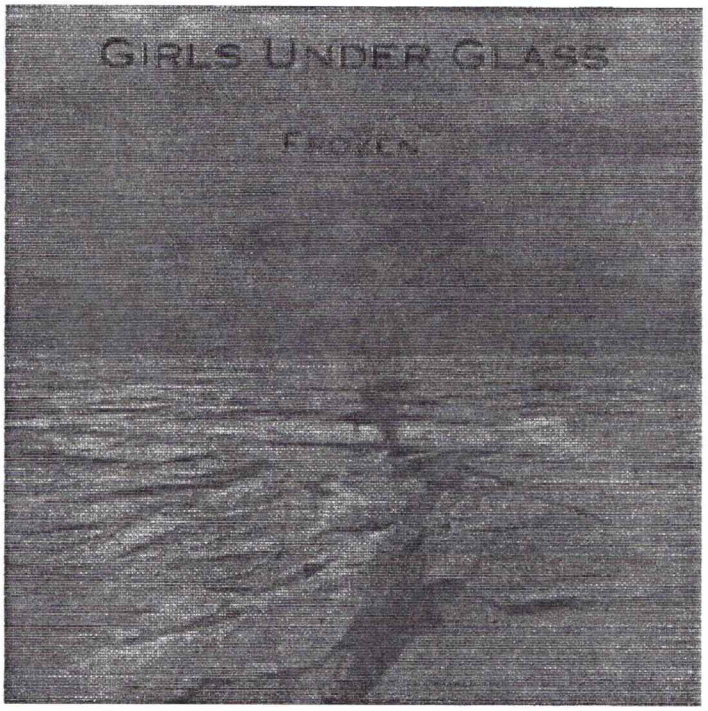
REVIEW: GIRLS UNDER GLASS – "FROZEN"

By Marcus Pan



Last year I received the first U.S. release of multi-decade artists Girls Under Glass for review here at Legends. The name of the CD was **Nightmares** and I enjoyed it so much I went and contacted frontman Volker Zacharius for an interview. Both of these items ran in past issues of Legends Magazine[3], so I'm not going to spend too much time talking about the band's history here, because I already did that. I still have **Nightmares** in my personal collection, and I still listen to it somewhat regularly.

After a year and a half (or so) wait, Volker Zacharius, Axel Armes and Hauke Harms return as Girls Under Glass and bring us the six track recording **Frozen**. While **Nightmares** spanned their multi-decade career and had examples of their work throughout it, **Frozen** shows a new frontier for the band. GuG are moving in a much more melodic direction – somewhat lighter, but still with an edge. **Frozen** also has a good collection of helper artists that joined them for remixes, vocals and other assorted things. The result is a great disc, with hints of their guitar-driven past but touches of smooth electronic melodies.

Opening with the recreation of Madonna's *Frozen*, which gives this EP its name. Girls Under Glass keep the original flavor of Madonna's original version, but slice it up and offer it as an industrial ballad. It retains its popular appeal and it wouldn't surprise me one bit if GuG break into mainstream radio with this one. *Wings*, with beautiful vocals by Sandra Bammer, gets remixing help from Das Ich's Bruno Kramm. The track is light and fluffy, with a swift rhythm lacking a pounding beat that instead remains floaty. Sandra's vocals further lift you as the track progresses. *Grey In Grey* picks up the pace using the chunky guitars we've come to expect from Girls Under Glass. However, it's tempered with smoother melodies and a quick up-front rhythm. Vocals are helped along by Peter Heppner of Wolfsheim fame, in a great male duet with Volker.

Girls Under Glass' latest shows some great changes within the style of the band. They've moved from heavy industrial stomps to smooth, sometimes swirly, excellently arranged melodic rock that retains the heavy edge that I've come to enjoy. **Frozen** is a surprise from an act I've come to associate heaviness with – but at the same time, remembering such past great tracks as their remake of Carpenter's *Halloween* score, I really shouldn't be. The melody-arrangement talent was already there, just not fully explored until **Frozen**.

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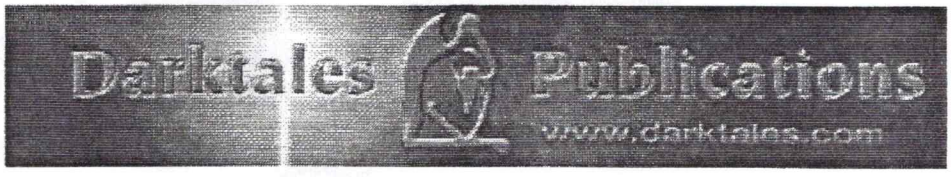
Phone: (760) 320-5577
Fax: (413) 215-0392
E-Mail: manager@vanrichter.net
Web: http://www.vanrichter.net



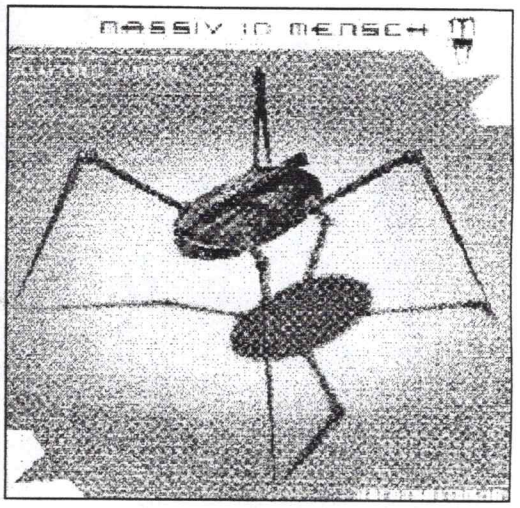
[3] Interview in Legends #99, June 2000. Review in Legends #97, April 2000.

INTERVIEW: Massiv In Mensch
by Zubrovka

Germany have always been the forerunners of EBM/industrial dance. For many years various music hot spots throughout the world have tried to win this title from them, but with continuing acts like the trio of Massiv In Mensch you can bet that a drag-down knock out fight is in order for any area of the world to earn the title as industrial music central. Massiv In Mensch, made up of Daniel Longemann, Mirco Osterthun and Sarah Folkens, celebrate a new release on ArtOfFact Records in Canada. **Belastendes Material** is as good as beat-laced dance ever was, and is available now.

After the socially hard-hitting release of **Belastendes Material**, Massiv In Mensch have headed back into the studio and you can expect a lighter, dancier and more upbeat side of the group coming in Spring with their club-style CD of **Die Rein**. But don't fret – because after that it's back to their commentary with the **Menschdefekt** release thereafter. Keep an eye on www.artoffact.com for more about Massiv In Mensch and to pick up Germany's new round of boot poundin EBM.

I'm curious to know the musical backgrounds of each member. Is there any classical study of music and/or where did each of their interests in music begin?



Mirco : I've got no classical study of music. My interests in music began when the typical German dancefloor in 1990 with bands like L.A. Style or U 96 started to bring new elements to the Electro-Scene. Then I discovered "EBM" with bands like Front 242 or Tommi Stumpff. Furthermore I like artists like Christopher Franke who combine classical elements with modern electronic.

Daniel : I've got a classical study of music since I was 4. Until 19 years I played keyboard instruments like accordion, piano or keyboard. Then in 1993 my musical interests changed to an electronic style so I began to work with software on my home PC. These are surely the roots of the Massiv in Mensch sound.

Sarah : I'm interested in music for a quite a long time. I started playing guitar when I was about 12 or so. Since almost a year I`m also taking singing-lessons.

Is it an ongoing experience?

Massiv in Mensch : Of course. Since now we are collecting and letting new influences enter our musical cosmos. So, yeah, you can say that it is an ongoing experience to work with music.

What is the purpose of your music? To merely entertain or enlighten, or?

Massiv in Mensch : We want to entertain and enlighten the audience. Of course both elements are important but relating to the studio work and live performing we have two different focal points. On stage it is important to entertain, during the process of working in the studio or when writing lyrics, it is important to express our state of mind.

What vision does each member have, what is the creative force that drives them?

Mirco : I want to express my emotions and experiences, but furthermore I want to create a perfect sound. I've got a natural inclination to perfectionism. In the first place, I dedicate my time to the sounds and the tool works of Massiv in Mensch.

Daniel : Because of the fact that I write all lyrics I have a very personal relationship to Massiv in Mensch. All the words are my energy, my kind of humor, my emotions and my anger. My creative force is my direct or indirect surrounding. My daily life gives me enough impulses to be creative.

Sarah : It`s quite important for me to have the possibility of being creative. Being a member of Massiv in Mensch gives me that.

Do you believe in the creative Muse? (aka the White Goddess)

Massiv in Mensch : Sure we believe in creativity but not in the creative Muse or other Goddesses.

Do you believe music can be used as a tool to bring about social change, or does it merely serve as a signpost in history, signaling a desire for change?

Massiv in Mensch : It's clear that music is the most important carrier of information and culture. Every title, every CD is n document of time. As far as that goes, music can definitely reflect social changes and processes in society or culture but also it can be used as a signpost for the desire for change.

Ok, I'm trying to understand your music and I think it is based on analogy. I appreciate it on the level of interesting melodies, that ebb and flow around your lyrics. However, I know there are other analogies or levels to it. Can you tell me about those others?

Massiv in Mensch : Every title of Massiv in Mensch contains obvious contrasts. Our work is to combine these contrasts to a warm fusion. It's correct that the most melodies have an analogy to the lyrics but also to the beats or the rest of the song. Massiv in Mensch is a very personal "cosmos" so the analogy begins when the first singer sings the first line. It's like a role-playing when every member of the band has his own part. And this part is filled with much personal intensity.

Any bands or styles you can name as influences on your music?

Mirco : Dance, Techno, EBM (Front 242, Some More Crime), Christopher Franke, Classical.

Daniel : EBM (old-school like Tommi Stumpff, Tilt!, Laibach), Utah Saints or other dance-acts. Techno, pop.

Sarah : EBM and Techno I listen to most... sometimes also eighties music like Alphaville or A-ha.

Is Belastendes Material a mix of social commentary or is there an actual continuing story line within in?

Massiv in Mensch : Belastendes Material is a mix of social commentary, but relating to the lyrics it is quite a bit fragmentary and punctured. After we release **Die Rein** this Spring on Artoffact Records, our next vocal CD **Menschdefekt** will be more conceptual and indeed there is a storyline within in. Our main subject will be definitely decadence in humans and society. The next CD, **Die Rein**, will be club techno tracks with very few vocals.

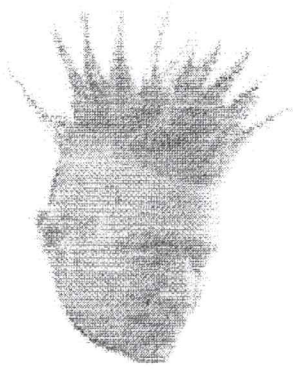
Do you have a preference to working in a studio over performing live?

Massiv in Mensch : We work in a studio as on stage. Both things have an attraction. The studio work is very precise, and the live performing is more emotional because we want to give much energy to the audience.

If the music stopped at this moment, how would you want to be remembered in relation to it?

Massiv in Mensch : Our wish is that our work will be remembered in the minds of the people and our companions.

THE MEAN LITTLE COLUMN – "MEAN LITTLE BOMB"



I knew the Bush administration would be the salad years for Rants. I just thought that I'd be able to feed off his crack-head gaff-filled days as he figured out which toilet in the White House you don't crunch in, and which of the Eisenhower dishware was best for cutting lines on.

But no. Some moronic assholes had to go and crash a few planes into the greatest city on earth and fuck up the party. Mongoloid ball-sniffers. All of them.

No I gotta tell ya. I'm torn.

On the one hand I was raised by children of the 60's. Although they didn't get to take part in any of the Chicago riots or National-Guard shooting runs at Kent State, they still raised me with a great abhorrence of war, pain and violence.

War sucks. It's a poor excuse to kill someone. And in war there's so much going on its hard not to accidentally go bang-bang in a school or hospital. War breeds suffering, and from suffering we get hate, and from hate some assholes get together and take a TWA plane into 5000 innocent people.

But on the other hand I like the idea that the gov't, who takes 1/3 of my measly pay, takes an interest when another country shows it has the will and the means to fuck with my home.

Thank you Mister Bin Laden. Because of you, I'm learning so much about myself. There are so many people that piss me off that I would never have realized till you got the idea in your head that a couple 707's could break America's spirit.

Here are some people I think that should be made official prison salad-tosser for about the next millennium.

Peace protestors. Ever since the 60's there are always a bunch of people who have to condemn America every time we fire a shot in anger. Usually because breaking news coverage of death and destruction interrupting Pokemon: the Jotho Journeys is a major buzzkill during that period of time after work they call the Mary Jane Hour. I've protested for peace. I've protested against America's at-times aggressive cultural attitudes. But c'mon! When someone points a gun at you and gets the shit kicked out of them by the cops, do you chastise the cops? Hell no! You buy them a fruitcake.

Tell you what. You can sign your name on a list that states, "Willing to be killed by a terrorist." That way, the next time Bin Ladin gets a hankering for a little American murder, he knows which address to mail the small pox to.

Here's another group of people that should be forced to play truth or dare at the next NAMBLA convention while wearing Underoos.

The grizzle-eating yahoos who just weren't satisfied with a 6 inch flag on their car. I haven't seen flags this big on a moving object since the USS New Jersey left port. And how come the larger the flag, the more bumper stickers they have? Usually a nice WWF Bumper sticker nestled somewhere between "A Child is Not a Choice" and Calvin pissing on a Chevy logo.

That's the beauty of America. We love to hate. Without an outside enemy we beat the living shit out of each other. We have intolerance to go around, but without someone to be pissed off at we blow up Planned Parent Hood, bitch about the President's mistresses and wonder who will win Survivor. I'll tell you, after September 11 I don't need the outback to give me the reality television fix I need to fill my empty life.

Gary Condit has to be thanking Bin Ladin in his silent prayer for getting the FBI to start looking for bombs and anthrax rather than Chandra Leevy's body. Ahh, I wistfully and nostalgically look back to those youthful innocent days when some intern polishing the Presidential monkey was such a big deal.

Here's another bunch of brain donors that should be forced to shit in a public toilet in Bangladesh.

These fucking news anchors that speed to be the first on the scene with anything. Angels of fucking death. They could beat the vultures to a dead steer in the Mojave dessert. And now it's ok for them to cry. Weepy fucking parasites.

I pray for Edward R. Murrow. Standing atop a building in London broadcasting live during the blitz as the Nazis rained down fiery death from above. Dan Rather weeps. Murrow would be opening up his mail live on television daring any Al-Queda fucker to mail him something better than a little Anthrax.

Here's some people that should have their perspective clarified by having a View Master with pictures of Ground Zero stapled to their face.

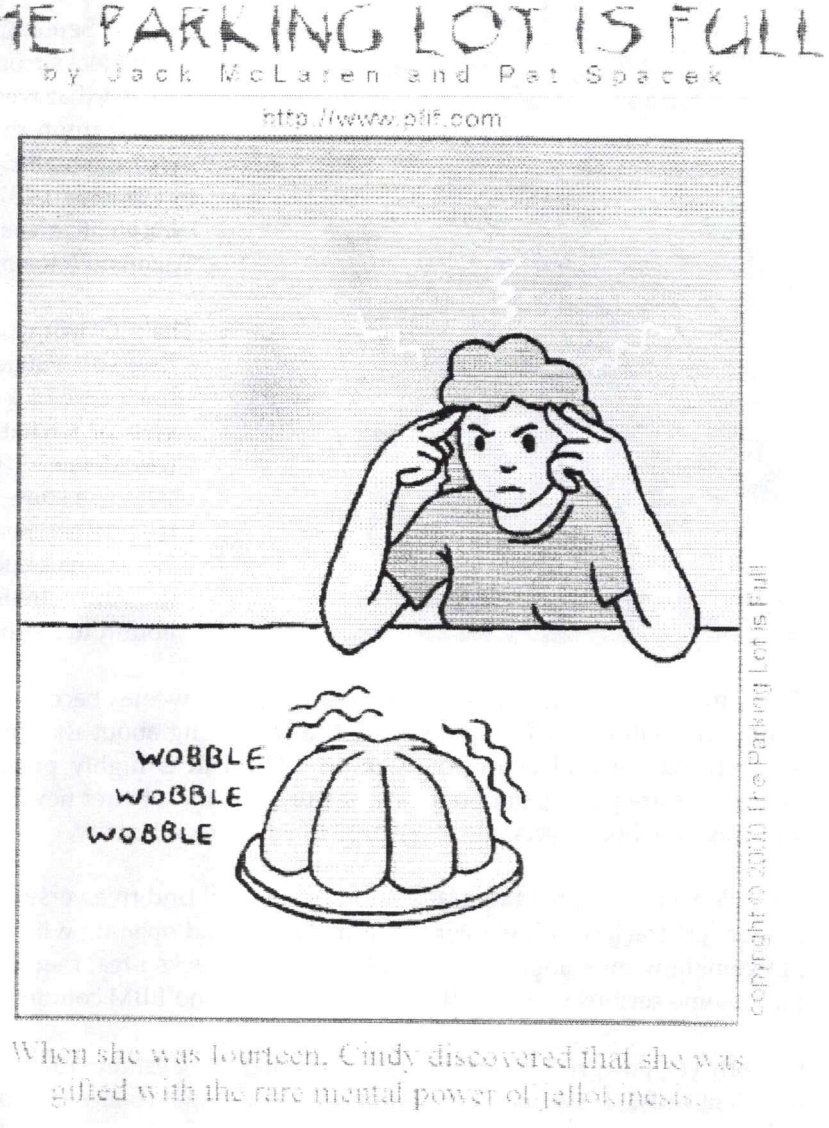
I hear a lot of people crying a bloody river that they're pissed at people looking at them sideways for wearing a turban. Not all Americans are very enlightened. Sorry. Plus for decades we've been watching people wearing turbans, towels, sheets, etc. screaming death to Americans while burning the good old stars and stripes. It was cute till they decided to kill a few thousand people in NYC in a fireball of crushing death.

I say if your faith is flexible on turban wearing, maybe you lay off it for a while. 50 years later and still no one wears a Hitler mustache. Not even Chaplin could keep that one going. But here's the coup de gras. This group needs to be rounded up, bound with barbed wire, and hosed down with used KY from last year's Porn Awards.

All these fucking weepy eyed celebrities doing their part. How dare Cheryl Crow or Alanis read a sedentary piece on the conflict, without showing some cleavage, and say they're doing their part? N'Sync is gonna make me feel better with their PSA? If they gave a fuck they'd be in the Arabian Gulf entertaining the troops while polishing some rifles a-la Bob Hope. I heard the senile old fucker wanted to go and support our boys fighting the Kaiser, but his bowels kept spilling out through his asshole.

Oh, and I do hope the troops are having the opportunity to enjoy these little rants. As a closing thought I'd like to make my suggestions for little love notes to write on the next bombs we're about drop on some Talibani caves.

10. Hey Mr. Taliban Tally Me Banana.
9. If you can read this, you're fucked.


THE PARKING LOT IS FULL
by Jack McLaren and Pat Spacek
http://www.plt.com
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
WOBBLE
copyright © 2001 The Parking Lot is Full
When she was fourteen, Cindy discovered that she was
gifted with the rare mental power of jellokinesis.

8. Give my regards to the other great Satan.
7. El Ka-Bong!
6. You may already be a winner!
5. Our bombs don't have to be hijacked.
4. Bin Ladin's Norelco.
3. The-e-e-e-e Yankees Win!
2. Smile, you're on CNN!
1. Mean Little Bomb

If someone sends me a picture of a bomb that is about to be dropped with 'Mean Little Bomb' written on it, please include your address as I will send you a Mean Little Shirt. Seriously.

Hugs and Smooches,
The Mean Little Man

REVIEW – CESIUM: 137 – "THE FALL"

By Marcus Pan

It was September 12, 2001. I was home because my office, located a few blocks from the World Trade Center (or what's left of them), was closed that week because of the disaster. Now I don't want to really touch upon the WTC thing much – everyone else is taking care of that from all sides as it is. But there is a story here and it does relate to Cesium: 137. So, as I was saying, it was September 12th. Laura brought in the mail and among the packages was a CD from label Tonedeaf Records, a Philadelphia based electero/EBM outfit.

The CD in question was, as you probably guessed, Cesium: 137's **The Fall** single. The CD cover you can see here on this page – the silhouette of a person jumping from the Empire State Building, with swirls of what I've come to consider smoke and gas milling about. Coincidence? Of course. Prophetic? Absolutely. Aren't true artists tellers in some way? I'm not saying they knew – but I am saying that true artists just see, sometimes without knowing it, and when you have talent such as the high-school born troop Isaac and Matt and the latest member (previously from Tech 9) Vince, weird shit is bound to happen.

The Fall has, over the course of the past couple of weeks, become my soundtrack. Not because of the prophetic cover – although I will admit it might say a little something about the times. But because, even though I only have this debut single to base my ideas on, the work on **The Fall** is highly proficient in arrangement, make-up, design and creation. These guys are young, but I defy anyone to show me a better new EBM act out there that won't kick you in the ass as hard and leave the boot rivets lodged securely in your rectal cavity.

The Fall of course is the title track – and here you'll find five version of it. Centered in the middle is *Language Without Lies*, the longest track standing over five minutes tall and opening with surreal samples – conversation snippets. Unintelligible but somehow meaningful. And with these two tracks I feel that their upcoming LP, **Advanced/Decay**, is surely going to make some serious waves in the industro-electro and EBM communities.

Smooth yet powerful, rhythmic yet experimental, Cesium: 137 know how to put together some heavy and stunningly excellent music for a bunch of just-out-of-high school (relatively speaking, from this old 3 decade fart anyway) guys. Sit

back and watch – since this group opens their career with a prophetic cover why can't I add a bit of my own? – I predict this trio is going to redefine, grow and utterly take the genre by storm.

Contact Information – Tonedeaf Records:
Phone: (215) 925-7763
Web: http://www.tonedeafrecords.com

OFF THE SHELF: "OUT OF THE SHADOWS"

By Marcus Pan

The net.goth scene of the Internet world is very familiar with the works of John J. Coughlin, aka the Dark Wyccan. From his web based projects at waningmoon.com such as the NYC Pagan Resource Guide, Corporate Goth and the Encyclopedia Gothica to name a few, John has infused himself into the net.goth scene as a major contributor whose efforts are wide reaching and provide excellent resources for the scene.

This time around however, John steps offline to deliver his book *Out of the Shadows*, sub-titled *An Exploration of Dark Paganism and Magick*. Within this volume he discusses things he's learned and picked up along the path of magick work, condensed and delivered here as a culmination of over fifteen years of study and work within this scene and craft.

John's *Out of the Shadows* is a book that covers many topics besides dark magick and Paganism. It also delves into darker scenes with discussions of goth, vamp, etc. and touches upon psychological aspects that move beyond magick and borrow – as well as lend themselves to – the *know thyself* credo. If one is expecting to find spells, incantations or any such within *Out of the Shadows* they are going to be sorely disappointed.

Also those that have been within and practicing such crafts for some time will find disappointment within these pages for it is written with a beginner's thoughts in mind. Refreshing in its simplicity, it attempts not to provide power but understanding. While the ten million or so "magic" books available on the market strive to "arm" modern warlocks and witches with spells and ritual explanations, *Out of the Shadows* instead touches on the inner workings of the person rather than the outer workings around them. While I myself didn't find anything particular that was helpful within these pages, that is because I'm somewhat experienced with this type of subject. Those that are looking towards darker paths will, however, benefit greatly with reading this before setting their feet on that path.

I also found the discussions of grounding and closure very refreshing. Many of today's half-assed "magic" books rarely touches upon proper grounding techniques and closings, and those that follow these types of situations will only find themselves snagged by rampant energy left "lying around" to be tripped over.

Out of the Shadows is however not a complete book for modern dark pagans or practitioners – it is instead a beginner's guide and first-step manual. While some of it's psychological aspect explanations, and scene explanations, might find themselves a bit pedantic and steeped deeply in personal experiences that may find themselves hard to lend to others, the book accomplishes it's goal overall of being a beginner's handbook and guide to help them determine not so much as where to go, but whether or not they're headed in the correct direction.

"Out of the Shadows: An Explanatio of Dark Paganism and Magick" by John J. Coughlin
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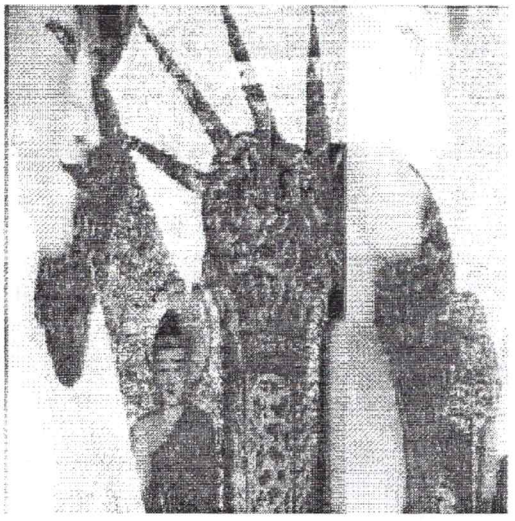
REVIEW: VAMPIRE NATION – "THE CRAFT"

By Azriel J. Knight



When I first heard the name "Vampire Nation" I was expecting something really different than what it was. I did a bit of research, read the reviews in Legends on the previous releases[4], and even saw a "Vampire Nation ate my balls" web site; now that was a fine piece of American literature I tell you! I sampled the album before I received it from our great Frying "Marcus" Pan and basically was not all that impressed, but I hear that reviews have to be longer than...88 words so here's the breakdown.

The CD opens up with a pretty funky tune called *Adoration Unto Nuit.* A fast synth line and slow drum deal gives off a pleasant result. By about two minutes into the song VN really blows it by changing the song completely without warning, I am now listening to a Nintendo Machine; or pre-Nintendo maybe even Atari. That's just what it sounds like, that VN stopped making their track and started playing video games not knowing the recording was still on. But eventually it stops, and then it starts back up again. It's a really dreadful affect and it ruins the good feelings I had about the song at the beginning.

Our next track, *Craft of the Union,* begins a little ambient with a very familiar drum synth beat. Here we have some female vocals. There is a bit more form to this track than any of the others. Vampire Nation's front man Fred Hamilton managed to find a decent female vocalist. *Trancision* is a fairly boring track. A basic synth line, with some panning synth and other sounds thrown into the play. You do hear a bit more of female vocalist Isis in here, but not much.

Drawing Down the Moon is the same way, and Fred keeps using the same drum line for nearly every song. Yeah there are some subtle differences, but go have a listen and you'll know what I mean. I don't really think a lot of thought was placed into these tracks, the longest one is five minutes and the average track is 2 and a half. Some of these tracks tend to be so minimal you would think that you're listening to an African busker tapping his hands on a bongo. With a track like *Invocation* there may be more to it, but you can record the first five seconds and loop the rest to make the song. *Alchemy* begins where *Invokation* left off and includes some of the cheesiest keyboarding work I have ever heard. Then Fred throws little jazz samples in the background.

Vampire Nation's **The Craft** is a recipe for boredom and cheese, no relation to Mac and cheese. Take one drum line, some African influence, horrible keyboard sounds and you have **The Craft**. I would see how this is an acceptable first release, but it's the third. The names of the songs give off a Danzig feel, with creatively thought up track names such as *Tarot, Five Pointed Star, Invokation, Spellbook,* and *Alchemy.* I do congratulate them on coming up with one good track though, it seems Fred and Isis work well together and should think about doing it more often if there is a fourth album. If there was a *Craft of the Union* single I might have picked it up.

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The PARKING LOT is FULL
An Alternative Comic Strip for Deviants

[4] **Bes-na-Maut** reviewed in Legends #93, December 1999. **Wise-ta-Nech** reviewed in Legends #105, December 2000.

REVIEW: RACHAEL'S SURRENDER – "SUMMER"

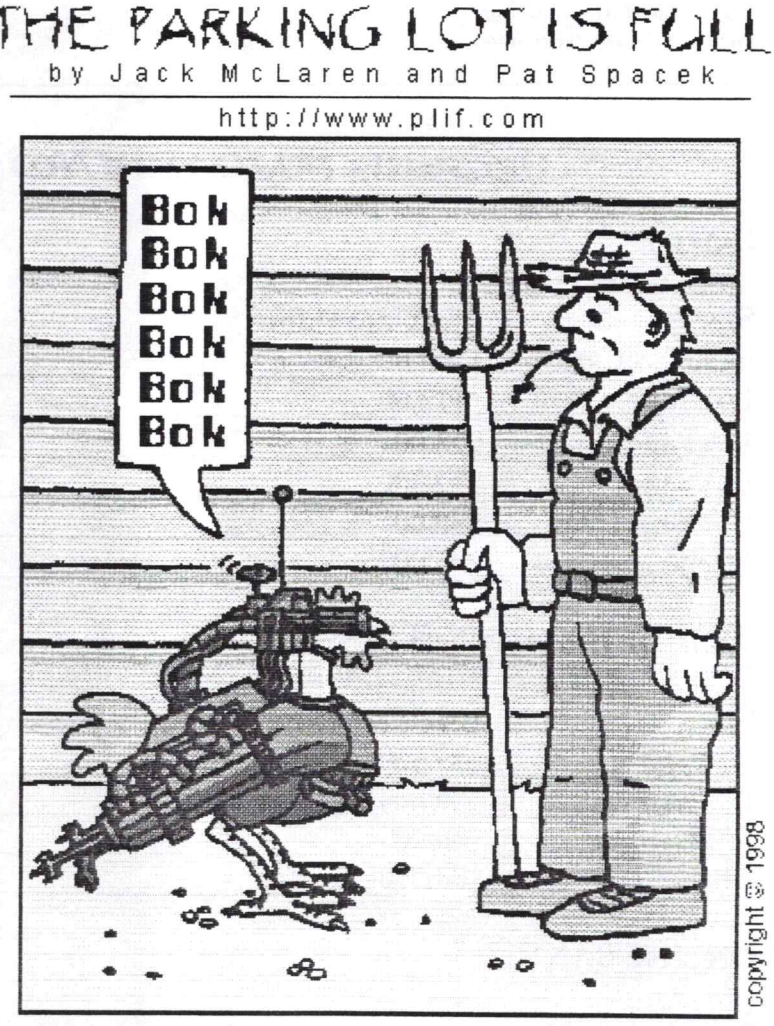
By Mike Ventarola

Rachel's Surrender are certainly not newcomers to the foray of Goth music. Two of their previous releases, **Dreams & Theatre** and **Blood & Kisses** are now both out of print. With the latest demise of Seraph Records, their previous release **Within Tears of Winter**, which was highly praised by the underground critics, may be on the heels of being hard to find as well. The current release, **Summer**, extrapolates the moodiness, dark ambience and Reuben's classical music training throughout. There is a hybridization of many genres in order to stir up a unique froth of sound to evoke the recall of a bittersweet memory.

Secret Lives of Angels (prologue) is an instrumental track that is somewhat new wave married to Goth and classical sensibilities. This track clearly demarcates the band's brilliance for executing musical compositions. *Soul's Tide* delves into a more darkwave realm that is moody and atmospheric. The drawback however is the sing-song style vocals that seemed to mar what could have been a beautiful piece of work. *Burn* played a bit more with a shoegazer style hybrid with some elements of jazz and new age. The music layers are consistently well done, but vocally the range is quite limited and at times flat which takes away from enjoying the song to its fullest. *Crimson Sky* attempted a new direction with a Goth sound by weaving a few more jazz percussive elements within the framework of the song. Sadly the vocals sounded as though they were from a bad night at a karaoke bar, again hurting a potentially magnificent song.

Musically this is a tight band with some excellent musical compositions, however the vocals are a bit too untrained for these ears. Needless to say, this was a cumbersome challenge to endure repeated listens in the anticipation that the work would grow on me. Musically, I was snagged immediately, however vocal notes that would have been more appropriate were not reached in the proper range. This heavily deflected from music that is fresh, vibrant and new, causing the songs to seemingly deflate rather rapidly. Despite repeated listens, this reviewer could not help but wince quite often, especially since they have a noted good musical track history behind them. It became impossible to critique each track without slowly becoming unnerved and annoyed. The band does have a number of fans, however, so take this as just one elder Goth's perception.

It is evident that the band spent an enormous amount of time writing and rehearsing the musical tracks. Despite the original and well-crafted music, the band effort and delightful playing remains overshadowed by vocals that seem to be unskilled, self conscious and lacking in depth. The best tracks are the instrumentals found at the opening and



Despite their reputation, the Borg have been known to make their share of tactical blunders.

closing of the disc, which really emphasize the astute brilliance in their writing skills and musicianship. Without the distraction of the vocals, one can really get into the complexity of only a mere glimmer of what this band can accomplish.

As far as sound quality and musical composition, this would merit a 10 out of 10. With the harsh limitations of the vocal ranges however, the recording would merit a 5, and I am being generous. The time spent on the construction of the songs didn't seem to follow through with the vocals. It is understandable that studio time costs artists a bit of cash, so it is disheartening to hear the developing genius fall short of grace by vocal tracks that are too self conscious and lacking in emotive passion to carry the work. Hopefully the vocal strength can be developed because this is a band that could really kick doors down with their otherwise great sound. These tracks could in fact become underground classics if re-tweaked and aimed in the right direction.

The other shortcoming was with the packaging. In what appeared to be the red/blue 3-D color scheme, reading the track titles without one of those decoders made deciphering a bit of a chore that ate valuable time. This is not necessarily a good move if sending out a press kit to labels. The folks at these companies have even less time to sift through all the nuances and this could also ultimately hurt the band in the long run. As much as I really enjoyed their ability to play and compose, there were just too many variables that took away from what could have been a positive musical experience. Hopefully all the kinks can be worked out shortly.

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For Lucy Greaves
who had no idea she was a muse

"Scaling the silence she sings, a twisted lullaby.
Drowning peace that dreaming brings,
Locked in her world she lies."

Liz Green, 2000.

Hercules tosses back his head and pounds on, snorting, pumping muscle and churning up turf, sweat stinging and sticky under his mane, sinews taut, exaltation infectious.

Lucy rides him like a beast possessed, knees clamped in tight to his flanks, holding on for dear, thrilling life, pleasure blooming in her belly, fingers snared, groping for purchase through hair tossing wildly down his neck.

And Lucy loves him.

Lucy smoothes the brush along his back and grooms down his flanks, pampering and relaxing. Soothing. Hercules fidgets under the tines like a nervous child, every tendon constantly primed to burst into action. Willing to accept gentle pacification, but far too well bred to succumb completely.

A hank of silken raven curls flows from Lucy's shoulder and sighs against fresh hay, plucking threads of gold from around her feet. Aching just a little from the day's exertion, body calling out for hot steam and foaming submergence.

Lucy aches even more to be back aloft in the saddle again; clean air and countryside filling her senses, tossed on the wind and galloping clear of all the petty inconsiderations life insists on hurling her way.

Hercules aches to be out there with her. Born to run; to leap brook and hedgerow. To carve up lea and forest alike with hooves afire. Alive to run. Alive to carry her.

Lucy wraps him in a blanket, checks on food and water, hugs him tight and turns off the lights. "Goodnight Hercules. See you in the morning."

Closes the door and locks him safe against the night.

And Hercules loves her.

Lucy's dreams assault her as she lies in her bed.

She's supposed to be safe here. Once tucked under the duvet, curtains closed and lights extinguished, nothing's meant to eke its way into her head and screw up the sweetness inside. Bogeymen and spectres, murderers and monsters are all repelled by the impenetrable shield spread across her bed. Any threatening situation can be combated by simply retreating beneath the sheets, imploring the nightmares to skulk away.

That's the way it works.

But not tonight.

Tonight evil has seeped up out of her pillow and traced an invisible trail from the ends of her hair up into the roots to eat a way through the bone-weave below and scatter infecting barbs throughout the frowning neurones knotting her sleeping brain.

Hercules whinnies and stomps as the door pounds again. Something unspeakable is trying to pry the locks and hinges away from the frame, splintering wood, levering hinges from sparring and sending shudders reverberating under his feet, above his head. Rattling deep into the centre of his bones. Panels shatter and explode inward, battering Hercules' head and legs, nicking, gouging tender flesh. He backs away into a corner, unable to turn and run, too scared to try to bustle past the nightmare glowering full of screaming intent filling the doorway. Sweat begins to froth at Hercules' sides, eyes rolling and panicked, breath heaving, hooves toeing at the straw.

Lucy thrashes in her bed, experiencing every jolt of Hercules' fear, flinching at every blow, screaming in agony every time the blade slashes another steaming scarlet stripe into his tender skin. Tears course down her cheeks as he sinks to his knees, unable to hold in the fountains of red that begin to dye every strand of hay across the floor, streaking the walls and seeming to drain the colour from even his hide.

Hercules' breathing is laboured and sterterous, tongue choking his throat, vision blackening and voice broken. All he hears as his lungs begin to clog with his own lifeblood are the pattering, faltering beats of desperation tapped out by his failing heart and the hideous, slurping rants of hysterical psychosis. Manic, euphoric laughter follows him down into the abyss and his heart is stopped. Breathing stopped.

But the blood still flows.

Out of Hercules.

Into the misshapen black intruder that rises to eclipse Lucy's vision of her beloved.

Lucy startles awake on her sodden pillow.

And Lucy weeps.

Lucy picks at her breakfast as though presented with a plate full of mouldering offal. She can't hide the red rims lining her eyes, nor the blackened, puffy skin supporting them.

"Are you alright?" they ask. "Did you not sleep well?" they pry.

Lucy slept very well. Until black fingers of vileness massaged her subconscious and moulded their outpourings into the shape of her most forbidden fear. Her face is still crossed by lines of tension drawn under their torture. Her cheeks are still stained and blushed by sorrow, mouth still turned to the floor.

Her dream has followed her into the sunny daylight.

Unable to shake the seething sense of brooding foreboding left in the wake of so torrid an aftermath. Sleeping only to start awake again and again as the visions left trailing behind the dream kept prodding her with spite, jabbing her fearful back into the waking darkness.

She can't get out of the house quick enough. To fling open the stall door and pour out her troubles into the ever-empathetic ears of her beloved Hercules and climb on his back, there to bounce and breeze the last feelers of nasty discomfort out of her mind and trample them underfoot.

At last the edges of Lucy's mouth begin to flex in the right direction. She hugs herself against the chilly air, away to the stables.

And Lucy smiles.

The stables are a flurry of activity, buzzing with life traipsing back and forth. Not surprising on the day that the Manor Show opens it's gates and beckons the region to compete in trials, pursuits, plants and parading. Backstabbing and banter. Good-natured rivalry and downright feuding.

But something feels amiss.

Too much fever to be last minute preparation.

Too much noise to be peaking excitement.

An odour alien to smooth running workdays.

Lucy turns the corner and sees the throng of babbling people crowded along the row to Hercules' stall, faces drawn and voices shrill. Everyone seems to be moving at a hundred miles per hour, but appear unsure of what exactly it is they are doing.

And Lucy spies the top of the door above the heads of the troubled crowd.

And one of the grooms spots Lucy heading for her horse.

"No, Lucy. Don't go in there," he calls. "You don't want to see inside." His hands are all over her like an insistent lover, intent only on stopping her getting past.

Lucy doesn't want to go in there.

Lucy doesn't want to see.

But she must.

Shattered splinters hanging from mangled hinges are all the clue she needs. The ashen faces insistence at barring her entry all the confirmation she hates.

Lucy already knows exactly what she is about to see. Has been witness to the scene laid out inside the innocent cell where her beloved received sentence.

But the smell hits her unprepared. Thick and heavy and heady and hot. Utterly wrong. The smell of salt and sugar and stain and defecation. Of corruption. Of despoilment.

Of death.

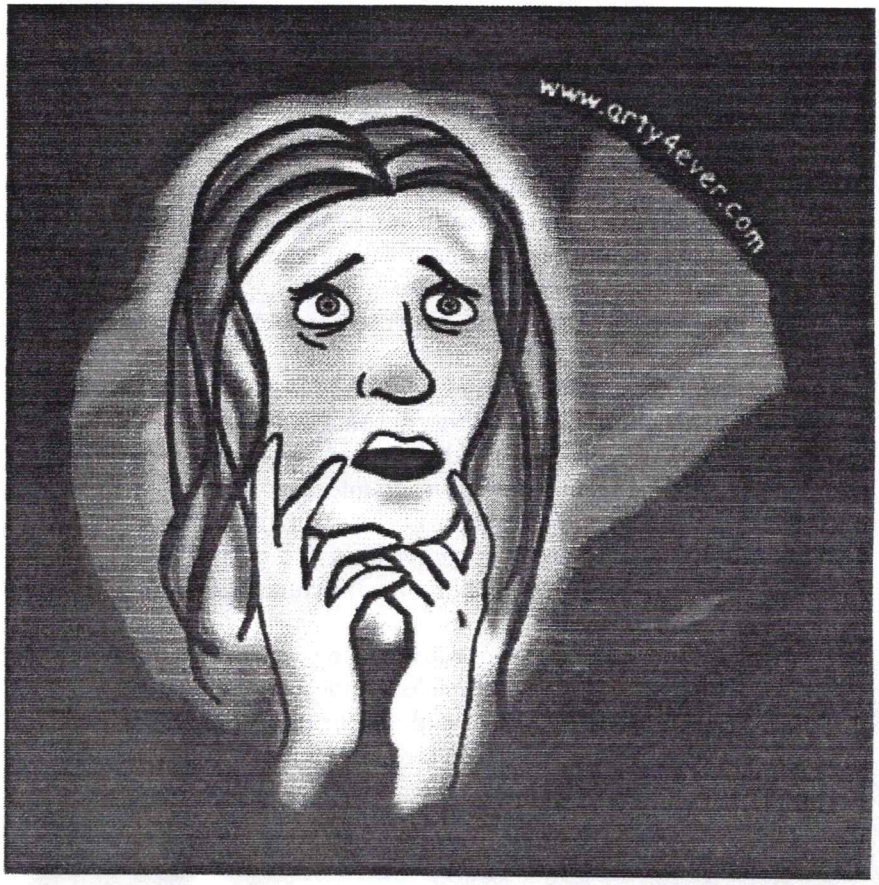
Lucy pushes her way past well-meaning hands and steps into the stench. Steps into the midst of torn, painted ruination.

Her eyes want to be scratched out of her head. Her fingers want to tear her eyes from her face, claw malodour from her throat. Her legs are water. Her bowels are mercury. Her mind is racing numb.

She struggles desperately not to throw up. That would be one indignity too far to greet her noble prince.

And Lucy screams.

And screams. And screams.



Lucy stands beside the enormous hollow in the meadow. Hercules' favourite field. He lays shrouded in silk, pieced together at the bottom of the hole, looking so tiny and lonely down there against the enormity of the gash in the earth. Against the swallowing black walls of soil.

Against Lucy's despair.

She can hardly reach the end of the eulogy. Desperate to maintain dignity to honour his passing, but utterly unable to keep the words from tripping, her throat from clenching and tears flooding. A carefully scripted remembrance becomes a tremor-shaken outpouring of utter desolation. Moaning and crying, it's all too much too soon.

Nigel helps her bow to the pile of soil beside the grave and she tosses in one crumbling handful. As it thuds, patters atop the spattering of roses and bounces down around his flanks, Lucy collapses, legs no longer able to support the weight of her sorrow. Wracked with sobs she watches earth piling on top of what remains of her Hercules. Insistent on staying until he's safely tucked away from the pain and horrors of life above ground before she can be led away to hide indoors. Away from the world and it's evil distortions.

Lucy weeps into shaking hands.

Withdraws inside the false safety of her own head.

And Lucy grieves.

Lucy picks out another wilting stem and puts it into the bag with the others, replacing them with crisp blossoms. She arranges them in their urn and tops it up with cool, fresh water. Picks out a few, curling leaves from one of the wreaths and weaves new greenery to cover the holes, embellish the design.

Sunlight rebounds from Hercules' headstone with little care for the pain it causes Lucy's sunken, grey eyes. Even the lace veil cannot mute the glare enough to calm her squinting. Her movements are slow and deliberate, a sullen attempt to cover the trembling that infests every muscle. She hasn't eaten properly since it happened. Can't banish that final, cauterising exhibition from behind her eyes. The nightmares return every night now, stopping her sleep. Sometimes even invading waking moments, requiring only vacant relapses into exhaustion to patch into her subconscious and drive raw, dripping horror into her eyes. Recreating desperate, impotent revulsion. Beckoning teeth-clamped metallic nausea.

She covers her ears and squeezes eyes tight, rocking back and forth and mumbles his name like a litany against the pain. But still it shines through almost non-existent defenses like razors through horseflesh.

The monster snuffed out Hercules' life in moments.

Tormented, terrifying moments.

Dismantling Lucy's life in the process. For her, though, moments of decay stretch into hours, days, weeks. An eternity to let the wounds eat away at her sanity. Dissolve her body down to a shriveled shell.

Hercules' body rests beneath her.

But Lucy's grief is ravenous, alive.

Hercules prowls the meadow in compounding frustration. Through a gauzy, insubstantial veil he can see Lucy every day, coming to visit him. He can hear her speaking to him and roaming the grounds like a black, billowing wraith that haunts the land, bound to it by death and circumstance. Hercules tries to answer, walks with and around her. Nudges her elbow and offers a consoling whinny.

But Lucy doesn't hear him. Can't see him. Appears to be coming as insubstantial as Hercules himself. Wasting away to nothing.

Powerless to help her out of her grief, to make her see that he is there, forever with her. Hercules rages and battles to make the connection. Livid with grief that his beautiful, vibrant Lucy is being dismantled before his sightless eyes. Her spirit broken, heart bleeding and shattered. All hope extinguished.

And Hercules seems powerless to intervene.

Somewhere beyond the voices keep calling, so strong when he'd first found himself dragged away from what looked something like an inadequate jigsaw of his body. They sang a soothing, enticing ballad from out of enveloping light. So tempting, the ethereal beckoned to him, as still it tries. At first he walked towards it, bathing in welcoming warmth.

But he turned back.

No matter how attractive the throbbing, pulsating eternity of light and companionship, there was something missing.

An enormous hollow that could be filled in only one place.

Hercules turned and ran. And still he runs. Back to the only sustenance his spirit needs. Ever running back to the glowing fires of redemptive love radiating out from one tiny space in the universes.

Back to his Lucy's arms.

Back to Lucy's love.

Hercules' body rests.

But his spirit wills him on.

Lucy's eyes run red with constant tears, cheeks permanently moistened, nose sniffling the only breaths she draws.

She barely eats or drinks anymore.

And but for the slack-jawed, waking nightmare intervals, she doesn't sleep. Practically Breatharian, she subsists on nothing but grief and the drive to protect and maintain Hercules' grave.

She knows that no one else will care enough to take on the task should she become incapacitated, has heard whispered conversation plotting committal, threatening hospitals. But she knows it will never happen. After all, she has their pity, if nothing else. And that's enough to stay their traitorous hands.

At times his presence is almost palpable.

If only she could find some way of bringing him back. There are times when she feels she could almost reach out and touch him. Run her hands along his flanks, bury her face in his mane. Nestle in the saddle of his back and ride away forever.

Weak and diminished, she has no real reason to go on living.

But Lucy survives.

Hercules' heart bleeds.

Lucy sits before him, tending flowers and plucking blades of grass in absent contemplation. Her beauty is weighted, almost hidden by a withered countenance. Perfect pale skin has become sallow and drawn; beautiful, sparkling eyes sunken, red-rimmed and smudged by charcoal puffiness. She has shed so much of herself that he can almost see through her. Her outline is indistinct against the meadow's lush greenery and only the too-big black lacery she wears creates any tangible evidence that she is there at all.

That and the tears that patter at his feet.

He struggles in vain to reach out to her, let her know that he's there. To let her know that he suffers too. And that reconciliation is the only remedy.

With all the power of his will he strains to break through the intangible barricade hemming him inside frigid, painful nothingness without her. Tears squeeze out of his eyes and his muscles ache and complain at the effort.

But it's all illusion.

There's no body except what he imagines. No cramp to cripple him. No heartbreak to incite weeping.

Without his back he has nothing to carry her by, without hooves nowhere to run. Without lungs no way to breathe in the summer-blessed scent of his mistress. Without contact he has no hope.

And Hercules despairs.

The shattered pieces of Lucy's heart cry out to the Heavens in impatient entreaty. All her desperate prayer and pleadings go unheeded. She's been cruelly deserted by an unfeeling deity. Life and happiness ripped out of her at the whim of a megalomaniac, sadistic hedonist creating misery for His own amusement alone. Continually destroying small pieces of His universe, as though in spiteful embarrassment at creating it in the first place.

He has abandoned her.

And His hollow laughter echoes down to mock her despair. With Him He's taken the single grain of connection she ever felt with the life she was born into. So deep the dislocation from existence, she can't even contemplate suicide. The notion so alien to her ill-existent nullity that it no longer occurs in the fretting preoccupations of her wretched family, let alone transfers itself into Lucy's spectral actions.

All that she wants is the gaping, bleeding wound repaired.

She wants Hercules back. Needs to see him trotting across the meadow to greet her. To feel the move of his muscle galloping beneath her again. Needs to erase the knowledge that his beautiful, noble body lies in tattered pieces beneath her feet, never again to tread impatient pathways for Lucy's freedom.

Time seems to stretch with every passing day.

The flowers seem to wilt quicker than she can replace them. Empty daylight and lonely, disconsolate nighttime merge into a single, grey eternity.

And Lucy has no choice but to endure.

Hercules strains and fights and roars and pleads. Battering resistance and passivity alike, the overwelcoming ministrations of the light left so far behind that he can hardly remember that it had been there at all, much less that he was supposed to be surrendering himself to it's custody.

He runs.

Gallops headlong across neon spaces of meaningless void. Remembering himself in the only thing that gave his life any meaning. The thing that death took so prematurely. He frees his soul in pounding rhythm, hooves drumming a steady, flying refrain across the aether. Giving him sight of his existence on any plain.

Back to himself.

Back to Lucy.

And Hercules snorts in triumphant euphoria.

Lucy feels, listens to the ground vibrate.

The sky is suddenly darkened. Dimmer. But there are no clouds to shut out the contemptuous sun. No thunder to sling down jagged forks of lightning to salt the hills. No rain to follow fiery heralds.

Fresh flowers rot into blackened sludge before her eyes and the grass is degrading to withered, yellowed degeneration. The birds have all stopped singing, as though they were but a recording cut before ending. The bees don't buzz and the humming, busy refrain of countless, thronging insects has shriveled to nothing. Even earthworms have stopped their scraping through the soil, and Lucy is plunged into charged silence.

And Lucy is afraid.

Hercules can't move. His eyes are closed and cramped in soiled darkness. Unable to decipher any of the garbled messages his ravaged body is screaming at his brain, Hercules does the only thing that seems to have any relevance anymore.

He tries to make his legs scramble back into motion.

Back to Lucy.

Forever back to Lucy.

It feels like he's trying to force his way out of a tightly bound harness. Blindfold gouging at his eyes and forcing choking fingers down his throat. Clammy bindings rasping his legs into excruciating inactivity.

But still Hercules runs.

The earth beneath Lucy's hand dances and sings.

But there's no music in the air, no melody. No uplifting, swirling beat to carry her mind away, distract her from melancholy for the duration of its attention. Instead there is fury and pain - so much pain - carnage and wrong embedded in the sound. Vibration hums a grimace of unnatural excision and spears a focus into the centre of her grieving. Intensifying the hurt, the longing. Swelling desolation and highlighting every blackened morbidity that seethes inside her being.

Lucy's choked by clouds of malevolent intensity. Battered by waves of shuddering depression that stream out and back inside her like wildfire breathing death into the life of a townhouse.

There's darkness crowding in on her vision, darkness closing down the light into a flattened tunnel that squeezes in on the sides of her head like a million migraines delivered in precipitous concatenation.

Consciousness pleads for release and she's swooning awake, utterly unable to detach herself from nauseating, electronic reality.

Forced to watch. Forced to experience every nightmare morsel, Lucy's hold on fragile sanity calmly drops its hold.

And Lucy screams.

Lucy wails and cries and shouts denial.

And Lucy screams. And screams her voice into destruction.

Hercules spirit soars and dances, exhilarated and elated.

There's chinks of light in front of his nose and the unbearable, crushing weight that's ground him into dissolution lifts, falls in rattling clumps from his head and he is forcing himself free. Reborn. Rejoicing. Revealed.

Light crowds in on too-long darkened eyes, blinding and confusing. Too bright. Too soon. Air forces itself into his mouth and down his throat, pushing out filth and suffocation. He scrambles up and out, legs thrashing at the earth, scrabbling for purchase, slipping and scraping until he is standing. Standing on his own feet on solid ground, feeling grass beneath his hooves, flowerbeds crushing under his weight. Suddenly the sound of birdsong is deafening, insects digging through the undergrowth louder than the beating of his own heart, even though the blood in his veins pounds out around his body like never before.

Hercules joys at being alive. Drinks in the pure air and possibility. He takes gulps of cleansing existence and stretches himself back into life. His life. He giggles and snorts at the victory he's won.

Escaping the darkness and tearing himself back into his body.

And Lucy is there.

He can see her beautiful face. Can feel the irresistibility of her presence. He smells her perfume - heady, intoxicating, invigorating. And his heart sings. Every emotion, every nerve in his body comes alive to the thrill only that knowing she is near can provide.

But something is wrong.

Lucy's backing away and covering her eyes. Covering her mouth, face. She is crying out and pleading for release. Waving away something that terrifies her, disgusts her, as though she can't see Hercules standing reanimated. Returned to her. All her fondest wishes granted beyond all hope.

And she screams, trips backwards and falls. Shields her head from the horror and howls, wails like a lunatic.

Hercules heart shatters anew to see her still suffering haunting torment and rushes forward to help, to give her comfort. To nuzzle his breath against her hand and soak it's calm rhythm along her fingerprints, taking the tension out of the tips and off into the sky.

But something is wrong.

Something is desperately wrong.

Hercules throat produces only gargled splutters, offending his ears with guttural indecency. His chest is full of stuffing once more. Filling with inconsistency and rot, as though someone has scooped out his lungs and replaced them with liquefying, maggot-ridden offal. His legs are unsteady and misplaced, uncertain of their own function and weak as a newborn, malshapen lamb. His hooves feel chipped and uneven, tail kinks limply down his back legs and his eyes begin to worsen, losing light and focus, rather than adjusting to its surprise. Thoughts begin to spiral out of control, whirling a descent into final, unhallowed, unwanted truth.

He realises that for all his effort, all his protests and rebellion, he hasn't run away from the light of enduring persuasion at all.

He's galloped a frantic journey of self-deceit right around into its inevitable embrace and it's there, in front of him, approaching, reaching out to swallow him. To welcome him. Conjuring up all the lives he's known, past and present and future and juggling them about his consciousness, to introduce him, at last, irresistibly into the fold.

Still reluctant, Hercules has no choice and concedes to supremacy. He is granted one last, adoring vision of the thing his poor Lucy has become before it is washed away. And only the finer reality of the glow of her abundant love propels him on into the netherland.

He sees that he achieved his aim. And it did neither him nor Lucy any good.

He accepts release and prays that she can forgive and forget him.

Hercules lets his broken body fall back to it's grave.

And accepts lamented harmony.

Lucy recoils from the trembling abomination that lies in limpid pieces atop the ruins of Hercules' grave. Something hideous, some evil beyond her comprehension has taken the collection of decay and disease and rank despoilment that had once been her own, beautiful creature and dragged it kicking and slurping out of peaceful rest, thrust it up through the earth to dangle on ethereal strings in some odious, crumbling parody of nightmare puppetry.

Just for her.

To punish her undying love, as though it were wrong for her to mourn him so heartfully.

Through her confusion she crawls forward, unable to halt her limbs and looks down upon the splinters, splashes and gashes, mould and maggot leftovers that sits, rests back on Hercules' headstone. A pustulous bag of decay. An abomination spawned to taunt her.

A nightmare sent to haunt her.

One hand sinks into foul ooze that was once her beloved, sucked deep beyond the wrist and gripped with glutinous viscosity.

A purple, blackened hank of rotted muscle that may once have been a tongue lolls out of the corpse's mouth, twitching as though eaten from within, and the tatters of flesh left on top of smashed, stained bone pulses with the stink of impregnated, creeping life, feeding greedily on the spoils of death.

One eye rolls around to centre upon her own, upon her face and there is a brief spark of intention there. Something tangible and peaceful and familiar.

And in that moment Lucy recognises the soul inside that stare.

And he's gone. Taken from her again. Denied her even in her madness.

Lucy's tender hold on frayed threads of brittle sanity hang on just long enough to deliver the knowledge that she dreads.

Lucy cannot have Hercules while she lives.

Yet Death will not take her.

And Lucy laughs.

Shrill.

Uncontrolled.

Unhinged.

Lucy laughs.

The nurse finds Lucy first.

She screams and panics and turns away. Runs and drags the doctor back to the bathroom.

Lucy's mouth is smeared with scarlet smudges, spread across her lips by the holes her teeth have torn through both wrists. They lie upturned atop her shriveled thighs, bobbing serenely on the surface of a becalmed pink sea, punctuated by pale, bluish islands.

Paper skin barely conceals tightened sinew. Muscles all-but wasted away.

All the life had been sucked out of her long before she forced Death's hand. Unable to resist, the Reaper's clammy hand finally had to clasp her soul to its bosom and yank it out of her suffering cage.

And left her there.

Lucy stares down at herself, barely able to recognise the wizened ragdoll as her own body.

She watches in awe for a while as first the doctor tries vainly to save what's no longer there to be rescued. Before deferring to paper and pen and certification.

Eventually she becomes bored and sets off in search of the light. And Hercules.

He's gone beyond, and all she can feel is the desire to follow him into eternity.

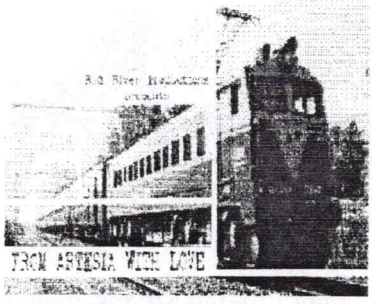
And Lucy seeks reconciliation.

Lucy's spirit roars derision. Cries out in twisted frustration. There's no light beyond for her. No words and thoughts and waves of comfort flowing over her soul to welcome her into the never realms. No Hercules to carry her across the divide.

She is anchored still to the house, to the stables, to roam the meadow.
Hercules is as dead to her now as ever he was.
She has been cheated again.
Punished beyond unfairness. Damned beyond salvation.
Hercules' body lies in the ground. And his spirit rests.
Lucy's body lies.
But Lucy grieves.

REVIEW: GINGER LEIGH – "FROM ARTESIA WITH LOVE"

By Dan Century



Think of all the wonderful gifts Long Beach California has given us: Snoop Doggy Dogg, No Doubt, Alyssa Milano. Add to that list Ginger Leigh: an eclectic musician straight outta South California. Many compare Ginger to Musimgause; I would add Steroid Maximus, Foetus, Praxis, Brian Eno and Tom Waits. Ginger draws from a rich pallet of musical flavors: from Middle-eastern and Arabic sounds, to low-fidelity hardcore techno. And best of all, his music sounds nothing like Skinny Puppy*.

The balance of the songs on **From Artesia with Love** share an exotic (because I live in New Jersey) Middle-eastern flavor (and forgive my cultural ignorance) – from the rich rhythms and vibrant melodies of *Taxicab ride through the city* and *From Artesia with Love* to the minimalist drones of *saffron*, you'll find it hard to believe these songs originate from a bare-bones studio in California. Listening to these tracks, and others like *STAR MAPS* and *little angles*, can be a truly transcendental experience – close your eyes and you'll find yourself speeding through a Moroccan marketplace or staring at the stars while lying on a blanket of sand.

From Artesia With Love isn't limited to the exotic. *Passing trains* is a low-fidelity techno/Zoth Ommog type piece that takes me back to the late 80's/early 90's Industrial sound – very basic and low-fidelity, yet the type of song that would set the tone for a night of dance floor drunkenness and debauchery.

Ginger scrapes the noise genre with *force it!*, and convincingly enters the soundtrack genre with *Red River* and *darkness*. A real surprise on the album is the lone vocal track *God is in the mountain* that could easily slip onto one of Tom Waits' recent albums without anyone noticing.

Fans of the bands mentioned in the introduction paragraph should be pleased to discover an up and coming entrant into the diverse ambient genre. Ginger has a long way to go – mostly in the production department – before he can take the stage with the big boys. With plenty of effort and some more time spent on the finished product, Ginger could find a place amongst the greats.

* If I have to review one more Skinny Puppy clone band, I'm going to quit reviewing music forever. Better yet, if you're a Puppy clone band I'll smash your CD, burn it, take a picture of the remains and then submit the picture as my review. Don't misunderstand me: I love Skinny Puppy, but I can't stand the fact that so few people are able to create original music.

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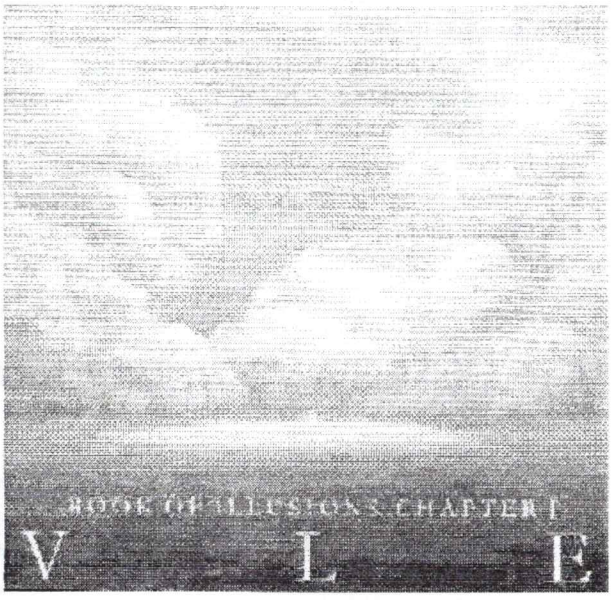
REVIEW: VLE – "BOOK OF ILLUSIONS: CHAPTER I"

By Azriel J. Knight



The beginning starts with the end, and what I mean by that is the first track off of **Book of Illusions: Chapter I** sounds like the end of someone's story, but not their life. Entitled *Kano* this song spoke to me the most, simply because of this contradiction. At one moment, the song picks up, then dies off and hovers there, and boom! Guitars enter the situation and they are crying out of loss, it almost sounds like a guitar that thinks it's a sax playing the blues.

The rest of the CD is quite different however. *Kano* is based on the new age sound with rock undertones while the rest can easily be considered doom/death metal. Track 2: *Freedom toFfly* reminds me of a combination of Theatre of Tragedy and Radiohead, the vocals are not extremely prominent through out this CD, and at first this bothered me, but as I listened the vocals are nearly always in complete sync, which I found impressive.

But all the way through the CD what grabs me the most are the guitars, especially in *Behold the Night.* Two separate guitars in the beginning, and when the drums come into play, the guitars mimic the drums in a way I don't think I have heard anyone do before. I was overly impressed by this song for that simple fact. The vocals for this song seem to me to be mostly a filler, to break the repetition.

The man behind VLE goes by just that. VLE means oddly enough eViL onE. In a recent e-mail VLE talks to me about the CD. "It came from within me as naturally as I would speak English," said the New York artist

My only complaint is the sound quality. Now don't get me wrong here, it's not static but it's dull in places. "Yes, the sound quality isn't good at all. A lot of the music was done on a shitty 4-track. All the music is improvised and wasn't meant to be heard by anyone," admits VLE.

This makes the CD seem more like a precious thing to have because of that, though. Where as most artists make the music with intentions of being heard by other people, thus affecting the music. VLE's music, though it may not be a top 40 hit, is completely honest, no holds barred. Maybe that's what real music is all about, making it for yourself to reflect yourself rather than for others to reflect what you want them to see.

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LET ME THINK

By Sue Simpson

Tony lay on the bed. Flat on his back with only the pocked white ceiling tiles and the sound of his ventilator for stimuli.

"Let me think."

Lately the times when he couldn't think were becoming more and more frequent.

"Dear God please just let me think."

He concentrated hard to bring his thoughts to order. Such effort, such bloody hard work. His mind shut down and he drifted off to that other place.

Was it the same day? He thought not, different perfume, different person. He could identify most of them on perfume alone now. That was good because his eyes were worsening by the day. He could almost feel the thickening of the cataracts as they grew over his once attractive eyes.

He could still hear. They say that hearing is the first sense to arrive and the last to leave. Even that was impaired though; everything audible came down a long, long tunnel before it reached him. By the time it did the sound was tired and distorted and couldn't always be bothered to make itself understood.

"Please let me think."

He was losing it. This one thing that had continued to serve him. He couldn't remember so well, couldn't reason as good, couldn't think straight. He was losing his mind.

"Let me think. Don't take my thoughts away from me too. Please just let me think and I'll ask no more. Make no other demands just let me keep my mind. Please God let me think."

Different perfume again. She was washing him. Wasn't it just a couple of minutes since they'd last washed him? He didn't think he'd shit himself, he could usually smell when he'd shit himself, but he didn't smell so good these days. Huh that was funny. If he could still smile he would have done it at that. Didn't smell so good. Get it? Another day must have passed.

The turning on of the fluorescent light marked his calendar. This was his only way of knowing that another day in hell had come to an end. He had no idea how long he'd been there, but it was longer than the life of two fluorescent tubes. He marked his Christmases by the irritating and pathetic dangly decoration that always hung directly above his head and by the nurses' excited chatter round his bed. At the last Christmas party, doctor Saresh kissed ... who *did* he kiss now? He did know. Damn, it had gone with all the other information that he kept losing. Like how to stop himself from shitting the bed and what sunshine felt like and how many irritating Christmas decorations *had* fluttered above his head.

He couldn't cry. They used liquid tears several times a day to stop his eyes drying out. Not being able to blink was a pain, but he couldn't tell anybody that it was a pain, just like he couldn't tell anybody when he had shit himself. Thank God at least for catheterisation. If he could thank the almighty bastard for nothing else, he could at least be thankful that he didn't lie in his own piss.

They could still cry though. Not they of the pleasant, and sometimes not so pleasant, perfume. The other they. They the family. They had an incessant ability to cry. Funny that, even after all these years they still cried. They didn't know that he could hear them, didn't know that he understood perfectly what they said, didn't know that he was aware. He once had a T-shirt that said, "I am aware!" on it, he never knew what the hell it meant, but he wished that he had it on these last however many years it had been.

They came everyday, one, other, or all of them en-masse. He wished they wouldn't. Wasn't it enough, one life mouldering away here, without them adding to the wastage of time? Once a month would do. They talked at him constantly, but not as Tony, sex god extraordinaire. They talked at him in silly sing-song voices filled with false optimism and plastic happiness. And then the façade would crumble and they'd cry. Thankfully not every day, but often enough for it to be another pain in the arse that he couldn't tell anyone about. They felt guilty because they could walk, talk, make love and shit in a toilet, and Tony felt guilty because he still made them cry.

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At least they did talk at him, the coats only talked above his head about him, and the perfumes just talked around him about their active lives. He was glad they did actually, better than them not talking at all.

Oh oh here they came now. The happy family. Taking their usual places round his bed, always the same positions, always the same chairs. Eh up what was happening? Something was going on, something different.

Mum's crying before she's even opened her mouth. At least he usually got all the banal chatter before he got the waterworks. An atmosphere as thick as treacle. What was happening? Think, c'mon Tony think.

"Let me think damnit. Just let me think."

They talked, they cuddled, they sobbed, they kissed him, they held his hands, and they sobbed some more. He wanted to pull his hands out from theirs. How could they do this to him?

"SHUT UP, shut up, shut up. You can't do this to me. I'm here damnit, you can't just turn me off. I'm here. I'm here. I'm still here. I CAN THINK." And in a small voice inside his head he thought, "And therefore I am."

He had been still for a long time, but then for the first time in eight long years ...

He was dead still.

REVIEW: V/A – "PANDAEMONIUM VOLUME ONE: COMATOSE ROSE"

By Marcus Pan

Pandaemonium, now currently called Comatose Rose, is a mini-zine, previously an MP3.com station and now offers a various artists CD compilation that you originally could originally pick up on MP3.com's ever popular DAM CD format. It houses MP3.com artists of course, and offers you nine tracks that run from industrial to ambient. The CD is now being pressed by Canada's Interdimensional Industries record label and is available at HMV as well as Interdimensional.com. Here's the skinny on the music...

Track 1: Christopher – *You're So Sexual*

Christopher's *You're So Sexual* is an awesome opener. Arabian drum breakdowns surrounded by horn-like synthesizer melodies and excellently worked vocal harmonies featuring Christopher's boyish golden voice. For more on this fine MP3 based artist, see both the Christopher interview[5] and review of his **Wer Next Projekt** CD[6] in previous issues of Legends. *You're So Sexual* is a highlight to this compilation.

Track 2: Not Applicable – *Atonement (remix)*

Immediately slowing down the compilation to a mellow groove is Not Applicable's *Atonement*. Nearly seven minutes of slow piano, rhythm and sighing female vocals slam your aurality back to a more even keel as you float along with this one.

Track 3: DYM – *Dirty*

DYM's track, *Dirty*, is truth in advertising. It remains slow and floaty like the one before, but adds in a grittier makeup with scratchier sounds and mud-washed vocals. It's somewhat minimal in design and make-up, but it isn't bad really. It's just not great.

Track 4: Project Zarathustra – *Innos Renegades*

Project Zarathustra still keeps Comatose Rose's slow moodiness flowing along. It picks up from *Dirty* with a more robust rhythm and a droning bass, and standing at over nine minutes long it's hella repetitive even if it begins to layer on some

[5] Legends #114, September 2001.
[6] Legends #117, December 2001.

soundscape like organs and keyboards over the other stuff. It acts as a filler and gives Pandaemonium the ability to say "nine" tracks instead of "eight," but that's really about it.

Track 5: Halo In Reverse – *Go All the Way*
Finally Comatose Rose wakes up and picks up the pace. Halo In Reverse's contribution to this collection is *Go All the Way*. Industra-crunchy guitar riffs, competent drums and garage-level production collide in a strong, gritty highlight to Comatose Rose. The track is arranged simplistically but does the job of being a healthy release from the grayscapes that preceded it. The really light touch ending will really surprise you – it doesn't quite fit the opening, but somehow manages to close *Go All the Way* nicely.

Track 6: Mistralth – *Silent Scream*
The sounds remain upbeat as we near the end of the CD. Again, Pandaemonium's picks for **Comatose Rose** (with the exception of Christopher's opening) hover on uncomplicated arrangements. While Mistralth's *Silent Scream* is a good song, it's not going to make me run out and buy their CD. Though it would make me preview more. The female vocalist is quite nice. The bubble-grit vocals don't fit with the upbeat and standard 4/4 rock rhythm.

Track 7: Silent Watcher of Dark Matter – *Sandstorm*
I discussed the work of Silent Watcher already in a previous review of all three of this outfit's releases (**Deep Space** I & II and **Installation**). This track, *Sandstorm*, comes off of the **Installation** CD. **Installation** was my favorite of the three releases I received from them. That's not saying much. See the review for a much deeper look into the minimalistic, windy, droney scapes of Silent Watcher of Dark Matter[7]. Try not to fall asleep – there's two more tracks left.

Right in the middle of an important business meeting,
Douglas receives a call on his cellular face.

Track 8: CommonHaus – *Acid*
If you did fall into a comfy slumber moments ago, CommonHaus is going to wake you up with a rather well done track called *Acid* that reminds me of work by Dream Disciples. Blarey guitar chords wrap around plucky guitar melodies and keep time to a forgettable but does-the-job drumbeat. While I wouldn't call *Acid* heavy, I would say it's loud – or rather has a big sound to it in a plaster wall sort of way.

Track 9: VLE – *Kano*
I can't say the word *Kano* without wanting to run out to an arcade to play Mortal Kombat. VLE however have built up something of a decently numbered following at their MP3.com homestead. The most memorable aspect of *Kano* is it's interesting drum beat – a slow, paused-tap style that sounds strange, and almost like a mistake, at first. But with the minimal chord wraps it becomes a nice accompaniment to some well written piano and guitar arrangements. VLE's percussionist shows talent with rhythmic time changes, tweaks and steps.

[7] Legends #119, February 2002.

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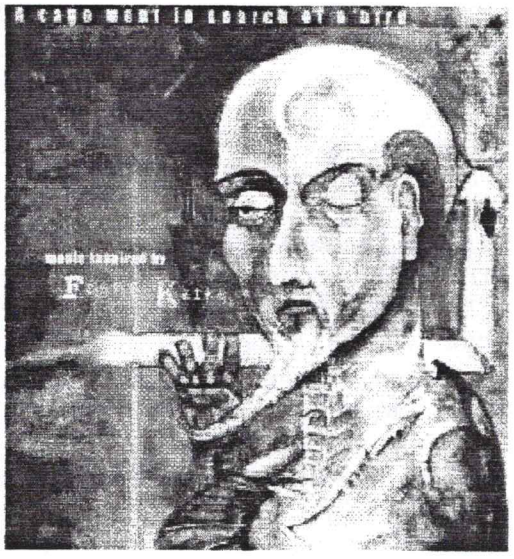
REVIEW: V/A – "A CAGE WENT IN SEARCH OF A BIRD"

By pixie



Even if you are the sort of person who barely read *The Metamorphosis* in high school, skimming the Cliff Notes, you know Franz Kafka wrote some bizarre stories. And thusly, it's safe to assume music inspired by him and his writing won't be bubblegum pop.

Much like the work of the author, this album is an eclectic mix of sometimes beautiful, sometimes disturbing images. Songs from bands including Attrition, Mara's Torment, Shinjuku Thief, Oblivia, and The New York Room capture the essential themes and feelings of Kafka's work. The album isn't a proper compilation CD in the sense that each song stands out; rather, each song blends into the other, leaving the listener with an atmospheric album that works as a whole, but not as individual songs.

None of the songs really reach out and grab me, but that's not a bad thing. This is almost a background music album, in the best possible sense – something to have on when reading, writing, or spending some time with someone else when you just want quiet music. As most of the songs lean towards an ethereal sound, the music almost sounds soothing at times, despite there being a whirling something else in most of the songs... a darkness... a vague discomfort... a sense that these songs are, indeed, something to be added to Kafka's legacy.

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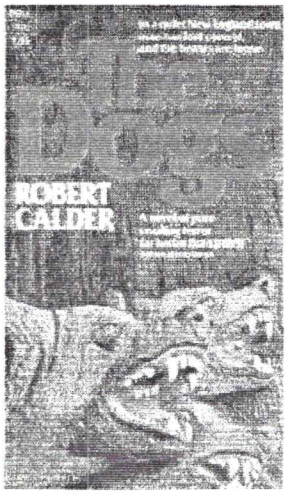
OFF THE SHELF: "THE DOGS"

By Marcus Pan



I'm not quite sure where this book came from to end up on my shelf, but I needed something light and fluffy. Hey, look, barking dogs! Light and fluffy. And so it goes.

The Dogs is a bad attempt at horror. I haven't found a story about mean canines that impressed me with the single exception of *Cujo*, but you know I can't just toss a book I find without first giving it a chance. There are a lot of problems with this book, but there is one nice thing I can say about it. Robert Calder is a master at gore – Carpenter and his ilk don't have much on the guts, blood and protruding bone fragments of this guy. There's also a lot of it, so diehard fans of bloodcurdling fun would like the descriptive cases provided here. Especially the skinning alive parts.

The characters that Calder creates attempt to be more than they should be. Bauer is pounded by guilt and angst because he didn't train Orph properly. And because of that, he feels it is his fault that Orph has this habit of jumping out of tree lines in the mountain woods and chewing

up people. Yup, his fault. Because he forgot to teach the german shepherd to roll over. So Bauer's character provides the guilt for the story, and attempts to be the associative character of the book. Oh I feel your pain, maan. Right-o.

Let's move on. Kathy, another character, who is there for no other reason than to fuck Bauer, is another one trying to be more than she is. Not only is Robert's sex scenes so bad it hurts, he then leads his characters into conversations that is something akin to Kafka meets Voltaire. And I was rather surprised about how bad the sexual situations here are – after all, he does blood good. Why not sweat? Let's leave the intellectual discussions of theology and sociology for another day and get back to the blood and gore. I also find it rather intimidating that he knows enough about dog sexual behavior to spend most of an entire chapter dedicated to detailed descriptions of canine sexual practices. Quite simply – I didn't need to know that.

But it was important. The details were unnecessary, but he does know a bit about canine sociology. The fights for dominance, the birthing of litters and the movements and habits of the wild pack both prior and following this. The litter was important to the story simply because it justifies the aggression of the dog pack, protecting young being an instinctual to-the-death sort of thing. *The Dogs* is, after all, a story about a wild pack of dogs terrorizing the neighborhood. And it does well in this regard, assuming you can slog through the paragraph long sentence structure. But with Calder's attempt to breathe intellectual prowess into characters like Kathy, it falls apart.

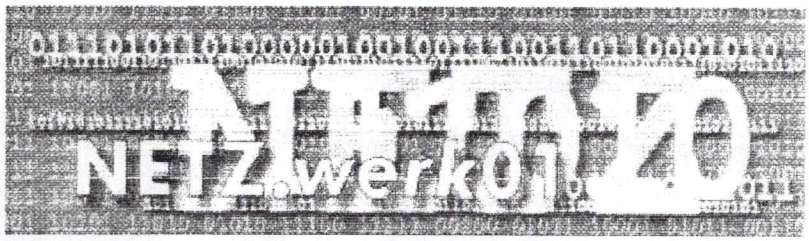
The ending was typical, but emotional nonetheless. I've had to put pets down in my time, and I can understand Bauer's feelings at having to do the same. But then again, I never had a pet that chewed a kid's face off, so I figure I'd be pretty ok with it and all if I were him – especially considering that one of Orph's victims was Bauer's own son.

The book itself has fallen apart – and I mean that in both ways. So you won't see me passing it along to somebody. And even if it wasn't more than tatters of brown paper right now, I'd probably only pass it along to somebody I don't like. And then let them wonder why Robert Calder has a better time with canine sex scenes rather than that of his own species. I find that kind of disturbing.

"The Dogs" by Robert Calder
Published by Dell Publishing Co., Inc.
Copyright © 1976 by Robert Calder

REVIEW: NETZ – "WERK01"

By Marcus Pan



ArtOfFact Records in Canada are still bringing us some excellent European industrial over the pond to the states. One of the latest is Netz, a multimedia and sound project that has been producing electronic music since 1992. Their debut release, **Auf Ewig**, hit the streets in 1996. They've been quiet since then, but a new partnership with Temple Music now brings us to the **Werk** series of releases – **Werk01** and **Werk02**. Both are distributed by ArtOfFact here in the states and Canada.

Netz perform with nods to both the music and the multimedia aspect of electronic art as well. The most recent was a production of **Werk02** in Toronto and Montreal to celebrate the ArtOfFact CD release of the same name – this was in November of 2001, just a couple weeks after I write this. While I won't spend too much time discussing Netz's **Werk02** release because here I'm reviewing **Werk01**, I will say that we'll have a full length review shortly of this release, and I do touch upon it in the Netz interview this month.

Let's take a look at what Netz have done here on **Werk01**. The first track, *Systemstatus* is an amazing opening with voices that could be vocals or samples. Bleeps that lead into complicated and wonderfully arranged electronics. Skinny Puppy

fans, take note! *Dynamic (cybercut)* opens suddenly with robotic German that precedes subtle key taps and a swift beat. The bass line is amazing and the post-robotic vocals tie the track together into a cyberpunk thrillfest of boot tapping EBM. The original version is also included here on track 14. I prefer the *cybercut* for it's awesome bass line.

Also on **Werk01** is the best nod and bow to one of the best science fiction creations ever put to print, silver screen and television. Yes indeed, I'm talking about Frank Herbert's *Dune*, and Netz take you through almost all of it. With an orchestrational opening, whispered vocals, ambient mixes and whistling backgrounds Netz take you on a mesmerizing journey of the novel in aural format. You can smell the spice, hear the worms, feel the wind and taste the sand. It's one of the longer tracks here on **Werk01**, and worth every second of space given it. It's downright beautiful. The only thing I didn't particularly like with *Dune* was it's abrupt ending.

Storm reminds me of SMP with it's jaded post-apocalyptic make up. Dodge the helicopters. Just in case you thought Netz could only create complicated rhythms for the sheer sake of pushing bodies around a trancey, near-mosh pit of dancefloor nightmare, *Puppen* will take you completely by surprise with it's laid-back groove. While the rhythm remains up front and fast, the surrounding chorales and occasional breakdowns tone it to give *Puppen* a more trancey appeal with the exception of some spots that lack the chorales and remind you that Netz are, after all, rivitheads and not trance DJs. *Gefahr* takes the moodiness of *Puppen* and injects it with pure Kraftwerk. **Werk01** closes with a remake of In Strict Confidence's *Industrial Love*. Slow, moody, awash with various sweeping scrapes of sound.

In short Netz manipulate beats and rhythms, swiping them through neurotically complicated bypasses of aural amazement. They use such subtle means of controlling their music as volume, reverb – things that have been lost to the world as EBM stopped getting better and started getting only faster. Old arts are re-discovered in **Werk01** and combined with modern intelligence, electronic gadgetry and mesmerizing complications.

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God and Chips

By Sue Simpson

"God and chips, flurry and fleas. Cuckoo."

The girl serving in the chip shop looked blank for a second, then her expression changed to one of shock as the man in front of her slapped himself across the face.

"Er, pardon?" she asked nervously.

"Bastard, bastard, bastard," said the man.

Louise Porter was seventeen years old and was in only her second week of employment at Park's chippy. She had already experienced the problems of having to try and deal with drunken men when they came out of the pub next door at the end of the night. So far she hadn't done too well in that area of her job description. Lou was cursed with being the epitome of 'the beautiful ideal; she blushed if a man so much as looked at her with bleary eyed, drunken lust. She cried if a customer became irate if she made mistakes with their order. She was keen and wanted to do well in this, her first job, but it was all proving very difficult. Now it seemed she had yet another drunk to contend with. She felt her colour rising and had no idea how to deal with this situation. Luckily she didn't have to. Frank, the owner of the shop, had heard the foul language and anticipating trouble came from the back of the room where he had been mixing batter.

"Now then sir can I help you?" He asked, wiping his hands on a white tea towel as he took instant command of the situation.

"Louise love, could you bring some more haddock from the large freezer please." He smiled warmly at the blushing girl.

"Yes, I'd like Cod and chips with curry and peas, please." Said the man politely.

"Certainly sir." replied Frank. They rarely gave him any trouble. Not many were foolish enough to try their hand with a man who's sixteen stone and often wielding a sharp knife or at the very least a wet, sloppy, battered, but uncooked, fish. He made up the order and thanked the man.

"Twat," the customer shouted from the safety of the door. Frank shook his head and heard him 'cuckooing' to himself as he walked up the street unwrapping his meal.

~*~

Jimmy felt safe in the Golden Ball, it was his local and he was well known. Nicknamed The Rusty Knacker to all the regulars, it rarely entertained any passing trade and Jimmy could be himself. He even considered some of the other customers as friends.

~*~

Jess had never been on a blind date before. She'd met Gary on the Internet, and it had taken an awful lot of persuading for her to meet him, Jess was shy and although pretty, intelligent and reasonably funny, she still had problems when it came to meeting people. For someone who could hold her own in most conversations with any one she knew well, and felt comfortable with, when confronted with a man in a man-woman dating situation, she clammed up and could never think of a thing to say. She would colour from the base of her neck right up to her hairline and no amount of her mother telling her how attractive it was for a woman to 'bloom' made the slightest difference to her rapidly retreating confidence. She had a feeling somewhere round the region of her solar plexus that the evening was going to be her biggest dating disaster yet.

She walked into the Golden Ball and instantly felt awkward as several men sanding at the bar turned to look at her. He had tried to insist that they meet in the park across the road and walk to the pub for a drink together, but Jess was a sensible girl and she'd heard all the horror stories related to computer dating. It hadn't seemed such a difficult thing to do when she'd suggested meeting inside the pub, but this was a far cry from sitting confidently in her living room and typing the words. This was actually *her* walking into a pub alone to meet a stranger, and feeling terribly self-conscious.

Five foot eleven, with brown curly hair and green eyes he'd said. They had been talking for months, but had decided not to do the photo swapping thing. They agreed that far too much emphasis was put on physical appearance, they had become friends through personality, not looks. He said he could talk to her about almost anything, something he told her that was very difficult for him in real life situations.

Most of the men slouched the length of the bar top, were middle aged to elderly. Gary was only twenty-two years old. Only one man matched the description that he'd given her but he made no effort to turn and look in her direction, he didn't give the impression of waiting for someone. But the hair was longish, soft curls met his collar and then flipped up and although she couldn't see the colour of his eyes they looked kindly and gentle. This must be him.

"Excuse me, are you Gary?" she asked as she nervously approached him.

His eyes met hers, and her first thought was that she wouldn't have described them as green, they were more hazel, with amber highlights that somehow gave an impression of keen intelligence and curiosity. It was a full five seconds before he spoke and when he did it was slow and deliberate. He seemed to be searching for each syllable before he uttered it and she wondered if this man was in fact not Gary, but someone foreign who thought in his native language and had to translate each sentence before he spoke it. His brow furrowed with concentration as he answered her.

"No, I'm sorry I'm not."

"Oh, right. Well I'm sorry to bother you. Thank-you." As his eyes appraised her she felt the blush beginning to spread from inside her collar, it rose rapidly up over her cheeks and didn't cease in its uprising until it had disappeared into her brown hair. The heat seemed to be coming from her face in a visible burning haze, though of course that was just her thoughts compounding her pathetic anxiety. *Relax* she told herself, *just try to relax*. She wanted to turn tail and leave after mistaking the stranger for her date. But she was rooted to the spot and found herself staring at a barmaid who was looking at her with an expression that intimated she had just spoken. Worse, she had asked a question that required an answer, and Jess had no idea what the young woman said to her.

"I'm sorry?" Said Jess.

The lady behind the bar seemed a little irritated at having to repeat herself.

"Can I help you, can I get you something please."

Jess' had a dry throat, yet the thought of actually ordering a drink and standing alone to drink it had not occurred to her, all her thoughts had been concentrated on getting the hell out of there. It didn't matter that Gary may well have been detained at work, or had suddenly taken ill, and couldn't contact her. Or even that he may have been run over by a bus. All Jess was certain of, was the fact that this entire room full of people *knew* that she had been stood up. And that each and every one of them was thinking what a sad cow she was. Actually no one in the bar was paying the slightest bit of attention to her, nobody was looking at her now, after the initial peering over their beer glasses to see who had caused the draft from the opening door, they had instantly lost interest in the new comer. Strangers didn't come here often, but when they did, they never caused much of a sensation.

"Orange juice please." She managed, stuttering slightly over the J.

Bad move, why the hell hadn't she asked for lemonade?

"Would that be, Britvic orange, Fifty five, or pure fruit?" Oh God, she had no idea, she really didn't want any of the drinks, but felt that she had to choose one.

"Pure fruit please."

"And would you like that as it comes, or with lemonade or soda?"

Jess wanted to scream at the woman that it really didn't matter.

"Er, as it comes please."

"Ice?"

"Um, no thank-you."

Jess paid for her drink and then determined to get it down as quickly as possible and then flee for home. She had some chocolate chip cookies in the biscuit tin, them and an evening in front of the TV suddenly seemed very appealing.

She took a sip of her orange and in her haste it went down the wrong way, she began to cough and splutter. Groping in her handbag for a tissue she noticed several curious eyes staring at her.

"'As it got bones in it lass?" Asked a man standing near the one she'd spoken to as she came in.

"Bones. Femurs," said the man next to her. She glanced at him and there seemed no malice to his strange remark, he didn't give the impression of being in any way sarcastic. She felt him looking at her as she coughed into her hankie. He seemed to understand her discomfort, although she was not looking at him somehow she felt that he *understood*.

She had to have another drink of the orange to stop the coughing from the first one and as she sipped at the drink slowly, her traitorous throat gradually stilled its contractions and she managed to get herself under control.

The man beside her gave a low whistle. It wasn't a wolf whistle exactly, but it seemed that it was intended to get her attention, she turned slightly towards him and knocked her purse on to the floor by their feet. One of the compartments opened and some of the loose change fell out. Jess and the man both crouched to pick up the purse and the spilled money. He met her eyes and smiled as if to say, "I do daft things like that all the time don't worry about it."

"Thank-you," said Jess as they straightened up.

"Would you like to sit down over there?" He asked slowly and deliberately, gesturing to a side table. "You'll find it more comfortable."

Still reeling from her embarrassment with the drink and purse Jess found herself nodding gratefully. He picked up both their drinks and moved towards the table, Jess had little choice but to follow him. She liked this quiet man but had no idea why. He was certainly attractive, very attractive in fact, but there was something about him that made her feel that they were both like fish out of water in social situations. He seemed to be feeling as awkward as she was.

"Would you like another drink?" he asked.

Then he did the most extraordinary thing, he raised his hand and stroked the right side of her cheek very softly. His hand dropped back onto the table and he glared at it as though it had acted independently of his wishes. Jess almost laughed at his expression but he looked sad and embarrassed by what he'd done. She was still wracking her brains for something to say when he did it again, and again, each time his hand dropped into exactly the same position on the table. He was blushing furiously and Jess' heart went out to him.

"Damn," thought Jimmy, as his hand raised to stroke her cheek for the third time. His thoughts were clear and lucid, always had been. He always knew exactly what he was doing, what he was saying, and how people were reacting. This lady didn't seem scared, bemused yes, but not scared. *Break the loop, break the loop* he willed his brain to obey him. Sometimes the only way to stop it, was to think about something else, focus his thoughts in a different direction or a different time, so that his brain flicked the switch on his actions, and turned the trigger off.

"God and Chips." He said to the lady. He had meant to ask her what her name was.

"Pardon?" she asked him with a slight smile that said she had no idea what he was talking about, but understood that something was wrong and that she wasn't going to run out of the door screaming. He was grateful for that.

"I had Cod and Chips earlier." Bugger that was a stupid thing to say, but at least it was an *intentionally* stupid statement, the kind of stupid thing that anybody might say.

"Oh right," she said, this time she did give a little laugh, but he didn't feel as though she was mocking him, it was a nice laugh and it made him feel warm. Jimmy couldn't talk to people, Jimmy especially couldn't talk to women. This lady seemed to instinctively understand that.

"Bugger, bugger, bugger," said Jimmy and then he made a noise like an exotic birdcall. He picked up a beer mat from the table in front of him and threw it across the room. "My name's Jimmy."

"Jess." She said smiling warmly and holding out her hand for him to shake. Now she understood. "You have Tourett's Syndrome don't you Jimmy?" She asked softly.

"Yes." He said and added his last 'cuckoo' of the night. He liked her directness; he liked the fact that she didn't seem sacred, and he liked the fact that this was the first woman ever, that he felt he might be able to talk to. The more Jimmy relaxed the less bizarre his language and actions became.

"So?" he asked curiosity getting the better of him. "Who's Gary?"

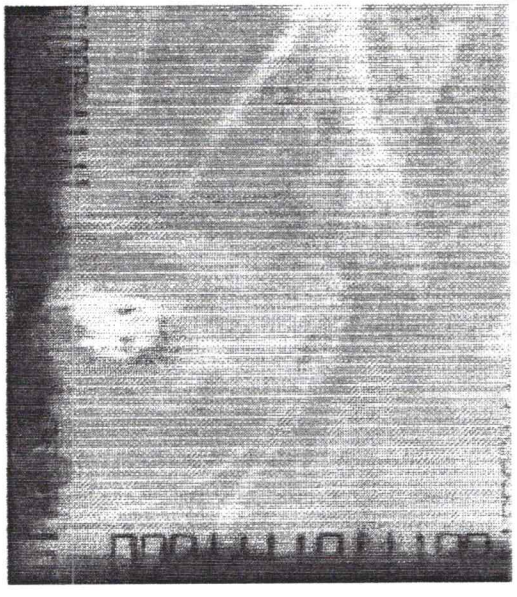
This time when Jess laughed it was warm and full of humour. "I don't know. Who *is* Gary?"

Jess grinned at him.

"Do you like pizza Jimmy?"

REVIEW: OMNIBOX – "ALPHA"

By Marcus Pan



The debut release of Omnibox, put out by Seattle's industrial/EBM powerhouse ADSR Musicwerks, is promised to be as strong as most other electronica outfit's follow up releases. Most assuredly, Omnibox show themselves to be a definite contender in the genre, with tight arrangements and well-created tracks that are very rare on debut releases. Truth in advertising indeed.

Omnibox are a triplet. Brandon Jerwa on vocals, programming and samples; Mike Lewis on same as above plus guitar; Necee Traillour on keyboards, programming and the occasional vocals to round out the heaviness of the other two. Together they produce some very well-made EBM/ electronica with elements of trance and industrial harkening back to the Kraftwerk era. They create not only dance-floor fillers on their new **Alpha** debut, but can slow it up and infuse a bit of surrealism into the mix as well.

Alpha is somewhat short, consisting of only seven tracks. One should say six, really, because the opening *Effigy* begins the CD as an introduction more than a stand alone track. Additionally all the tracks phase one into the other well and with aplomb, and most here are moving numbers that are dance-centric and EBM styled. *Ice Age* is an exception to this rule, being a slower and laid back piece that would be welcome by the swirly Goths – it wouldn't surprise me if you see a complete change of people on the dance floor going from *Dead Religion* to *Ice Age*.

Outer Heaven is a fast paced number with windy vocals and interesting synth-slides. A moving trance-like piece, just under 4 1/2 minutes of acid-laced tripping. Subtle yet powerful guitar riffs round out the sound and give it a heavy edge. *Crucified* immediately slows down and takes us into an atmospheric surrealistic world that slowly rides into an industrial nightmare. Synthwork and samples here are wonderfully placed and the subtle but strong guitar styles are there in the background adding a grinding punch to the otherwise poppy keyboard melodies. This one drags us along for over eight minutes. Vocals are not as windy-laced as the previous track, instead they're nearly untouched. This adds the only link to reality left as the crucifixion continues.

Dead Religion brings the guitar and metallic style to the forefront. Not one of my favorites here, but definitely one of the top dance floor hits with its tight industrial stomping nature. Then you slow down into *Ice Age* as I stated previously, and following this *Ultron 5* picks up the pace only slightly, moving from the slow BPM into one a bit quicker, lifting us slowly

and evenly into the closing *Perfect (Digital DNA)* track, which closes **Alpha** on a strong industrial pace – a highlight to the CD.

Omnibox's first CD out the gate, **Alpha**, is what ADSR promises it to be. A debut release, but you wouldn't know it judging from the makeup. While most bands will gear up to an excellent release with a decent debut and further good releases to culminate in an amazing CD in their future, Omnibox step out the gate already at that culmination. One can only hope that they can find a higher mountain to climb following **Alpha** so that they can still continue upwards.

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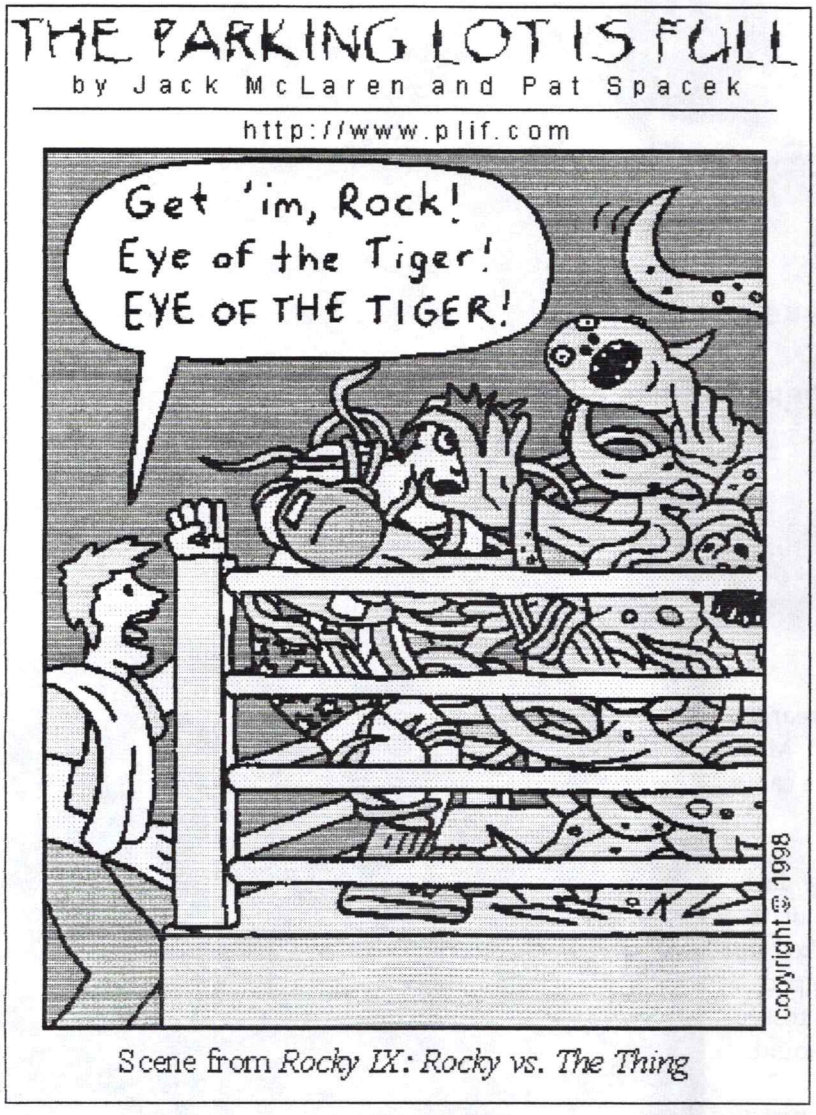
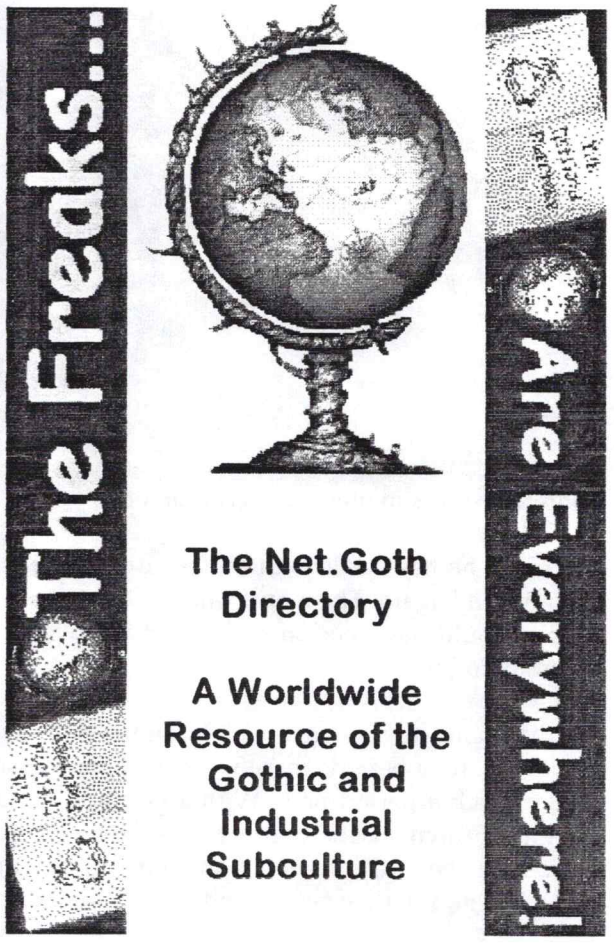
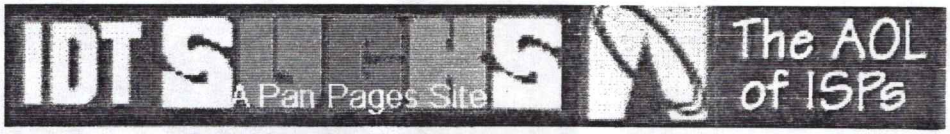


Scene from *Rocky IX: Rocky vs. The Thing*



www.legendsmagazine.net/pan/netgoth



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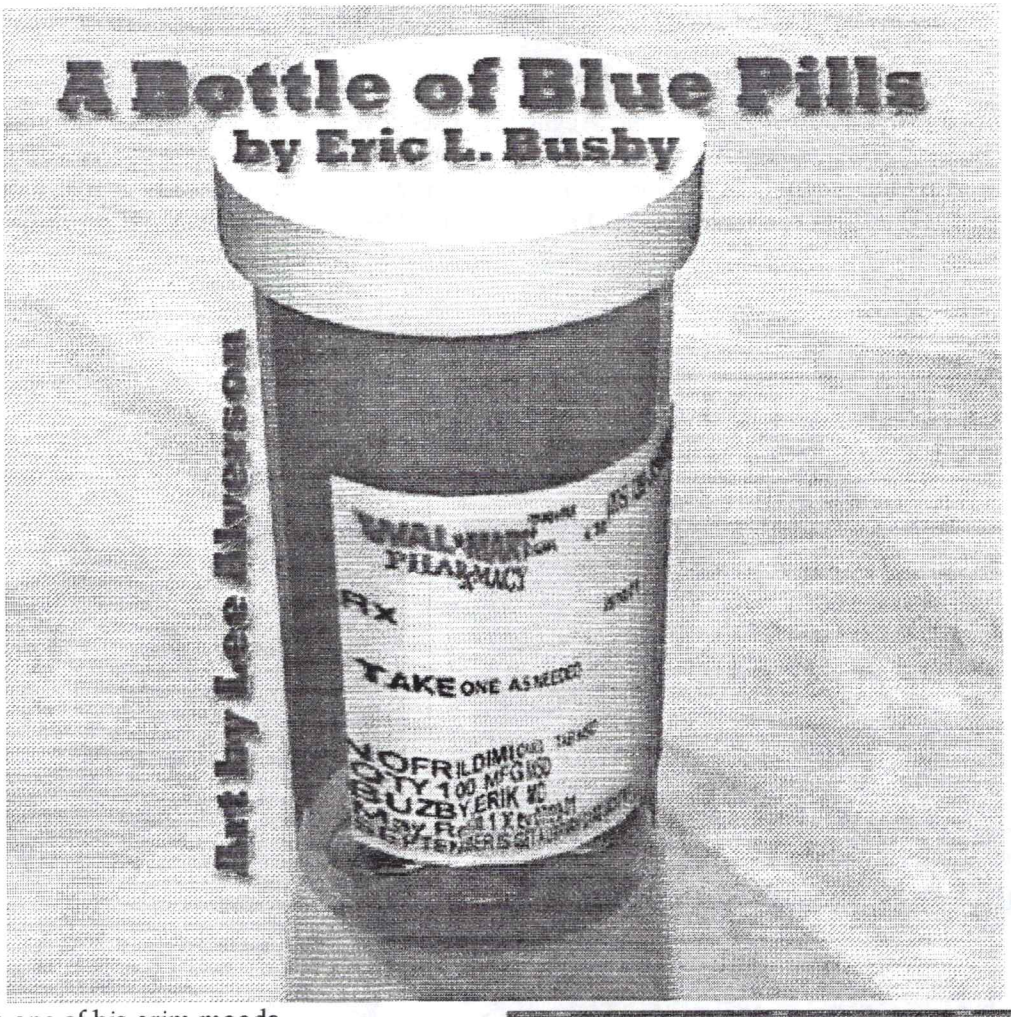
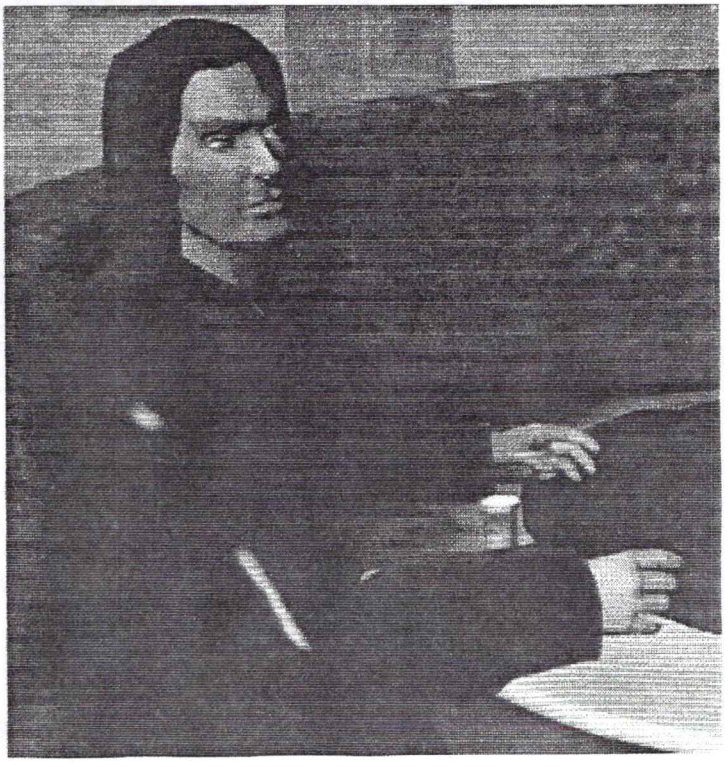


Jason Kaine was in one of his grim moods.



The curse he had dealt with all his adult life had rearing its ugly head again. The mania phase was not so bad. Most people would pay good money to get the high that came naturally to him.

But the mania always gave way to depression. Very dark, very dangerous periods these were. And Jason was on the cusp of such a period now. With a grimace he picked up the little brown plastic bottle before him and popped it open. He fished out one of the small blue pills and tossed it into his mouth, then swallowed it down without liquid.

The medication was supposed to help his brain chemistry. Keep everything stable. No highs, no lows. Just an even keel. When asked what he felt like on meds, Jason often said it was not good and not bad. Just different than what he felt like off them.

"You want anything sir?" Jason looked up from his table. The waitress was dressed rather scantily. Black stockings held by a strap to her frilly little maid's outfit. She was

cute looking and very desirable. But Jason also knew she was one of them. Or so the reports he'd read indicated.

"Water." Jason answered back. The waitress looked a little confused. Jason glared at her, "Did you hear me?" He asked with a snap.

"Yes." The waitress said with a hint of annoyance, "I saw you take something. We don't allow drugs in here."

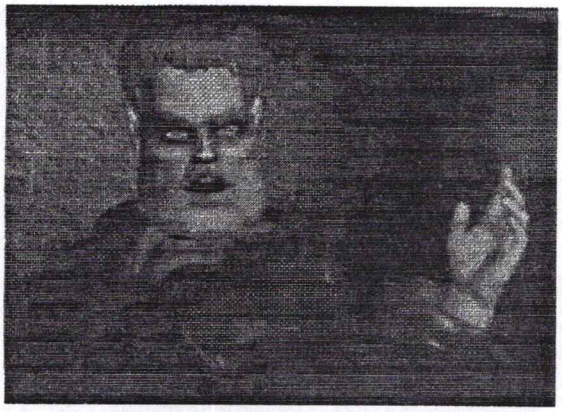
Jason chuckled softly, "It's prescribed." He said waving the little brown bottle, then he put it into his coat, "I've a medical condition."

"That's what they all say," The waitress said, "Just take your 'medication' before you come in here." She turned around and started back towards the bar. But didn't make it five steps before a bullet ripped a chunk of her head off.

"Thanks," Jason said as she dropped to the floor, "I'll keep that in mind." He pulled the trigger of his gun again. A bartender's head exploded into gore across some bottles of cheep liquor.

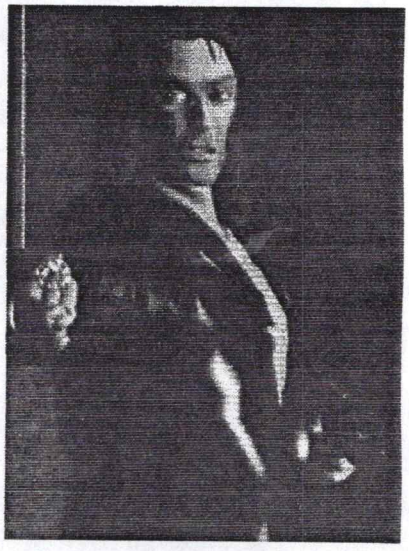
There was a lot of screaming. People were running for the exits in a blind panic. Well, the humans were making for the exits. This was good, they weren't the ones Jason was after. The vampire, on the other hand, was. And he was standing his ground and not looking happy. Jason pulled a second pistol from his brown trench coat. Things were about to get very messy.

"I don't know who ya are," The exceptionally fat vampire said, "But ya fucked up comin' ta my bar." He was dressed in a suit that was a few sizes too small for him and at least ten years out of fashion. Don Johnson of his Miami Vice days was probably his idol when he was turned into a vampire. He looked like one of those scummy guys who sells kiddy porn in seedy back room bars.



Which, ironically, is what this vampire often did. He went by the street name 'Snackman.' What his real name was Jason had no idea. Nor did he care.

"Kill 'em!" Snackman said with a snap of his fingers. Three other vampires came out of a room behind the bar. All held bats or clubs of some sort. They looked like rejects from a Marilyn Mason concert. Jason didn't bother to say anything but started pulling the trigger on his guns as fast as he could.



The rain of hot metallic slugs he'd unleashed slammed into the vampires. Ordinary bullets have little effect on vampires. But then these were far from ordinary bullets. They were a special designed by the military to deal with unusual circumstances. The bullets ripped the very flesh from the vampire's bones. When Jason was finished, the vampires were a mass of torn chunks of meat. Some were still alive. Yet in no condition to do much but lay upon the ground and ooze. Jason stepped over two of them and made his way to Snackman.

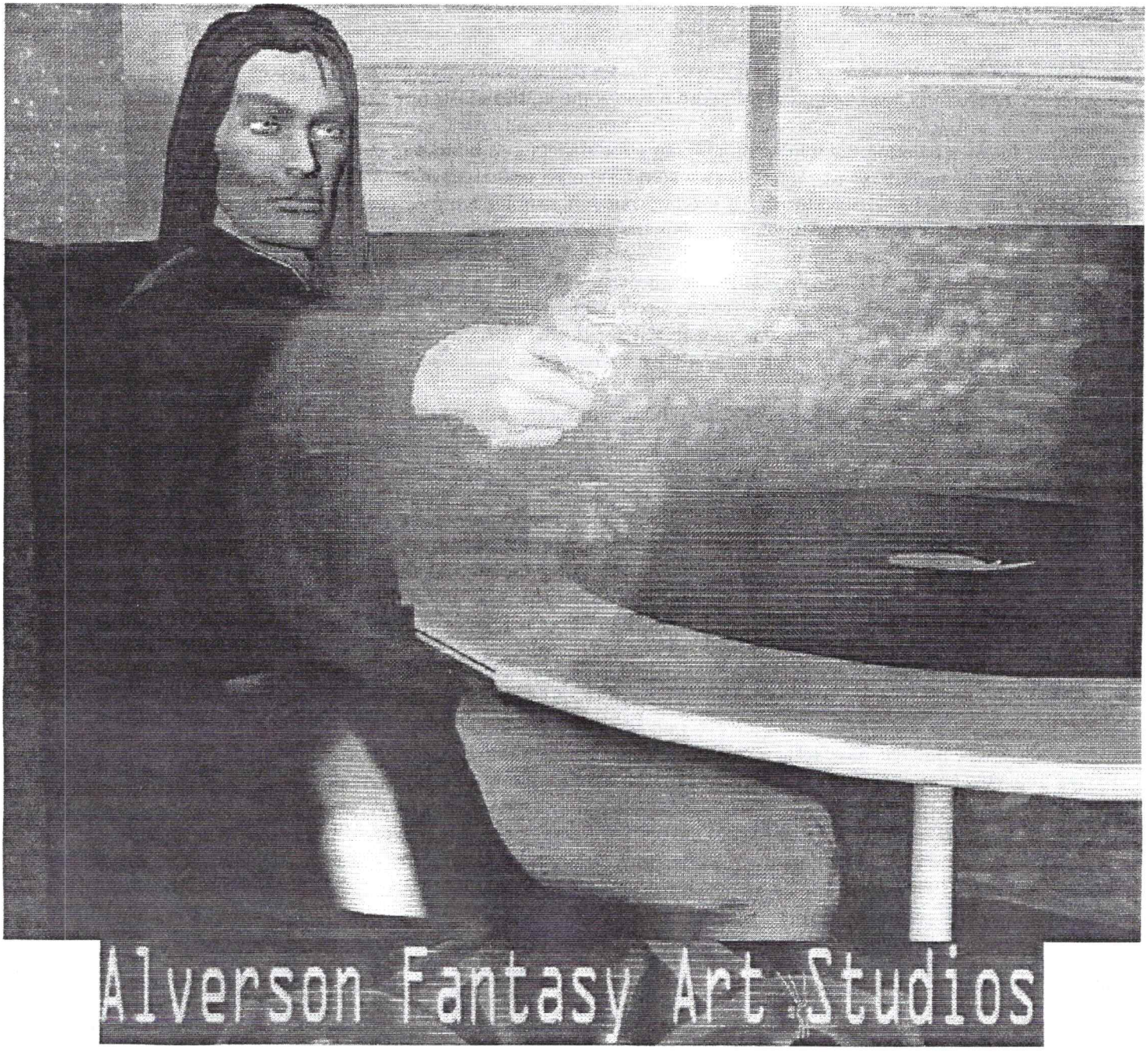
"B... Ba... Bastard!" Snackman groaned out as he tried to look defiant. He found this difficult with his ample gut torn open and his intestines spread all over the floor. It reminded Jason of the linguine he had before coming here. Jason put his pistols back in his coat and pulled out a large round grenade. He pulled the pin free on it's side.

"Who the fuck are ya!" Snackman yelled. Jason dropped the grenade on the mass that had once made up Snackman.

"Santa Claus." Jason said, "Have a Merry Christmas." And he turned walked out of the bar. Snackman tried to pick the grenade up from his guts, but found his arms no longer had hands on their ends. A moment later the bomb went off engulfing Snackman and his fellow vampires in a ball of fire. And the whole of the bar as well.

Jason stopped and looked back at the growing fire where the bar had been. He pulled a cell-phone from his coat and dialed up a number, "Its Kaine. Beaker street nest has been eliminated." He snapped the phone closed and tossed it back in his coat. Then Jason looked back at the fire again. He felt nothing. Not joy for stopping the vampires. Not depression for the lives he had taken. He just felt calm and stable.

"Guess the meds are still working," Jason muttered. He turned and walked off into the night.



AFTERWORD

And there you have it kiddies. Legends #118 hits 49 pages. I'm not sure how, considering I've been holding steady in the low 40s, but I'm sure it's not a bad thing. Hope you enjoyed it.

Next month we have the usual assortment of goodies. Our featured band interview is Netz. We also have an interesting article - yeah, a real journalistic type shizzits! - by John Ludi as he covered the RozFest '97 event in NM. Yeah, it's a bit dated, but a lot of fun. Includes his photography of the event and it's a good read - if you thought your buddy who taught himself how to speak Klingon was weird, check out these folks.

Also, come back to check out a pile of full length CD reviews from members of the staff such as Mike V., myself, Hirez, Gothpat and more. We'll look at releases from UK's Wasp Factory Records (D.U.S.T., Chaos Engine, Freudstein, Goteki), MP3.com and indie bands (Silent Watcher of Dark Matter, Amber Spyglass), ADSR Musicwerks (Glis) and more. You'll get a triple shot of Off The Shelf book reviews from me (including the new underground release by Lethe Press, *Trysts*).

I hope our columnists The Mean Little Man and Mike Ventarola will appear - they should be hard at work in their respective dungeons banging out the wit, sarcasm and news.

We'll have poetry from Sue Simpson, fiction from Peter Miller and Logan Russell. Illustrators on board next month include the debut of Pangia as he illustrates Miller's fantasy piece, *From The Letters of Father Canis: The Apple Cart*, which will be a serial series that will return to us in the future as well. Maik Schlundt messes around with some of our regular writer's fiction as well, and I'll round the whole package out with a bunch more Parking Lot Is Full comics.

So I'll catch everyone next month. See you in February, have a kick-ass new year type thing and hope the overly-commercialized - yet sometimes still fun - Holidays of '01 treated you not so bad, if not damn swell.

In a desperate attempt to acquire the knowledge necessary to pass his final exam, Ed Vernon devours his Algebra professor's brain.

Peace, Love and All the Trimmings (but NOT the FAT!)...

Marcus Pan
Editor-In-Chiefness
December 30, 2001
3:49PM